

**REAL
LEADERS
FOR THE
REAL
WORLD**

Essential Traits of Successful
and Authentic Leaders

John McLachlan & Karen Meager

REAL LEADERS FOR THE REAL WORLD

Essential Traits of Successful
and Authentic Leaders

John McLachlan & Karen Meager

Real Leaders for the Real World

First published in 2014 by

Panoma Press

48 St Vincent Drive, St Albans, Herts, AL1 5SJ, UK

info@panomapress.com

www.panomapress.com

Book layout by Neil Coe.

Photography by Vicki Bunn Photography.

Printed on acid-free paper from managed forests.

ISBN 978-1-909623-56-9

The right of John McLachlan and Karen Meager to be identified as the authors of this work has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any material form (including photocopying or storing in any medium by electronic means and whether or not transiently or incidentally to some other use of this publication) without the written permission of the copyright holder except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988. Applications for the Copyright holders written permission to reproduce any part of this publication should be addressed to the publishers.

This book is available online and in bookstores.

Copyright 2013 John McLachlan and Karen Meager

Acknowledgements

We want to acknowledge the influence, impact and support of our former business colleagues, academic trainers, friends, students and clients. You have all been and continue to be our teachers.

Karen and John

Approved Testimonials for Real Leaders for the Real World

*“Better to have tried and failed than never
to have tried at all.”*

**Martin Gilbert; Chief Executive,
Aberdeen Asset Management**

*“So relevant. This book brings grounded
scientific and psychological knowledge and
real experience into a practical guide no
leader should be without.”*

**Dr Wyatt Woodsmall PhD;
President of Advanced Behavioral Modeling Inc.**

“The concept of leadership is too often solely associated with those at the head of organisations. Leadership is a skill that all of us should hone. This is a great read. It explains quite complex topics in a way that the reader will get and learn from.”

**Colin Kennedy; Senior Director,
Thomson Reuters Elite**

Contents

Introduction	8
--------------	---

Part 1 - The Foundations of Real Leaders

Chapter 1	13
Why we need Real Leaders in the Real World	

Chapter 2	35
Emotional Regulation	

Part 2 - Real Leaders, Real Problems

Chapter 3	59
The Age Old Problem of Time	

Chapter 4	73
The Age Old Problem of Other People	

Part 3 - Five Key Behavioural Traits of Real Leaders in the Real World

Chapter 5	93
Use Feedback to Succeed	

Chapter 6	113
Take Considered Risks	

Chapter 7	131
Are Forward Focused and Flexible	

Chapter 8	147
Do What They Say and Say What They Do	
Chapter 9	165
Develop Real Relationships with People	
Part 4 - Doing it in the Real World	
Chapter 10	191
Stepping Out into the Real World	
About the Authors	204
Reference Guide and Recommended Reading	206

Introduction

The world needs more leaders. The world doesn't need more robots.

We are in a tricky place right now; the world is more diverse and complex than ever. With the spread of and access to information faster and broader than ever, gone are the days when people just do as they're told. For every fact there is a counter-argument, for every right way there are problems and complications. My way or the highway just doesn't cut it as a way to run a family, a business or a country.

The problem is that as a society, we haven't done a very good job in nurturing the next generation of leaders, because what is required is what most of us just don't have. There are few good examples to follow, which is not because the leaders we have are bad people, but because the whole realm of leadership is often seen as some mysterious arena, where only strong, fearless, special people live. Countless leadership books seem to support this.

Yet our experience working with leaders for many years has taught us that people who have the title Leader or are in a place of authority have the same problems and issues as the rest of us. Many are plagued with self-doubt, conflicting priorities and communication difficulties. These are common problems and ultimately possible to overcome and our aim in this book is to show you how to do just that and become a leader who is real.

This book will provide a pragmatic, practical development approach for people who are already leaders and want to lead in an authentic way, become more successful and do all of this with ease and grace. We are also looking to inspire people who do not see themselves as natural leaders, either because of their own self-doubt or because they look at what they think a leader is or the common perception of leadership as something 'only for the chosen few'.

Everyone has the potential for leading; there is no one formula for the 'perfect leader'. In this book we will show you how you can develop your own style as a leader, live the life you want to live and use your skills and abilities for good.

As part of writing this book, we have completed research with over 60 leaders from all walks of life, mainly business, and also public sector, community leaders and leaders of charities and families. In this book we will present the key factors for leaders' success as a result of this research and we will take you through how you too can develop yourself as a leader; no magic formula, no need to be someone you are not. You can be yourself and be a leader – fact.

Not everyone has the will or the capabilities to become a big leader in the business world. Not everyone wants to be the next Steve Jobs, Richard Branson or Barack Obama. Most people want to live a happy, fulfilled life though, and most people want to do a good job – whatever their area of interest or skill. So whether you run a multi-million pound business or want to

lead your family in a way that nurtures everybody for success, this book will help you to identify your areas of self-development, train yourself to bring out the best in you and be a guiding light for others to follow.

Our research has shown that there are some key things good leaders do well, even if they all do them differently and with their own style. It is simple – yes, and achieving them is in the pile of ‘easier said than done’. Relax though, with our help and armed with the knowledge and practical tips in this book, it is very achievable for most people – very achievable.

In this book we will take you through each of these elements, outline why they are not naturally developed in people and why this is a problem. We will then help you to identify where you are, where you want to be and give you some easy-to-follow steps to get there.

We have been there, done it and are working on the T-shirt. Our background is in business leadership so we know what it’s like to be there and the real problems that leaders face. We know that theory is interesting and often hard to apply in the real world. Since starting Monkey Puzzle many years ago, we have developed our psychological knowledge, and putting this together with our business (and human) experience, we have supported many people to become the true leaders they are. We are not interested in developing clones of ourselves; we are most definitely not perfect. We are constantly inspired by how people can find better, more creative and more exciting solutions for themselves than we can give them. We are experts in

taking complex applied psychology and science and applying this to real people in the real world to solve their problems and achieve their goals and dreams. In this book we have integrated knowledge from experts in their field and link it to practical, actionable steps that you can take to be the leader you want to be.

We want to see leaders out there in the world who are unique in their personality and style, doing good work and making the world a better place.

PART 1

THE
FOUNDATIONS
OF REAL
LEADERS

CHAPTER 1

Why we need Real Leaders in the Real World

“The three most important jobs on this planet are Parents, Teachers and Leaders.”

Frank Pucelik

Leader. Now there’s a word that can generate a strong reaction in most of us, and lead to arguments around any dinner table or post-work pub get-together. What makes a good leader, what makes a bad one? Does the world need leaders who are strong, single-minded and driven to get things done quickly, or leaders that are flexible, able to listen to everyone’s opinions and who take time to reflect and consider before doing anything?

We suspect your answer will be a reflection of what you believe, how you have been brought up and your experience of leadership up to this point. If you look around you, you will see many examples of leaders –

some good, some not so good. Our judgment of a good or bad leader will be dependent on our point of view, it has to be. To evaluate anything, we need to process it in our own head, connect it up with what we already understand or our life experience. That makes it subjective; it makes it our point of view. As the rational, intelligent people we think we are, we will, of course, have many facts, statistics and evidence that will clearly demonstrate that our point of view is correct. It's what keeps us sane, safe and secure in our world – knowing we are right and being able to justify it.

The reason there is so much argument and discussion about good leaders is that what makes a good leader is, like most things, based on our opinion.

Think about someone you think is a good leader. Why do you think they are a good leader? We all focus on different aspects of a person's behaviours based on our own beliefs and values, our own aspirations and our own limitations.

Let's consider a few recent prominent leaders in the world.

For those of you from the UK of a certain age, Margaret Thatcher evokes strong emotions, depending on what your (or more often, what your parents') political persuasion was, where you lived at the time and what your parents did for a living. When she died, we were shocked by the outpouring of emotions that the passing of an elderly woman who had not been in power for a generation gave rise to. The polarisation

of a nation was clear, with those whose obvious and deep rage against all that she stood for was matched by the feelings of genuine admiration shown by an equal number of people.

The thing is, whether she was or wasn't a great leader depends on your values, your attitudes and your perception of the results of her time in charge of this country. We've read many books about her and there is very little everyone can agree on, as whether she was a great leader or not depends on your opinion and memory and less on facts. With the passing of time, both those who supported her and those who didn't can still argue about the impact she had on the world.

Now look to the other side of the Atlantic and arguably the current most recognisable leader in the world – no, not Homer Simpson, we mean Barack Obama. Another leader who divides opinion based on your values and beliefs. For some he is a strong, quiet, self-assured, diplomatic, long-term focused leader who has the capacity to see all sides, reflect and take decisions for the greater good. To others he is a dithering, weak, indecisive leader who changes his mind weekly and is style over substance. How you view him will depend on which qualities you focus on, your attitude to time (long-term/short-term) and your own beliefs and values. His behaviours, decisions and actions can be interpreted in many different ways. This is true of all leaders, and true of all of us.

Myth Buster - Objectivity

There is no such thing as an objective view, there are only degrees of subjectivity. The minute we take something inside ourselves, we make it subjective and it is influenced by our own feelings, experiences, beliefs and values. Having more data than someone else about a topic or having more people who agree with you does not make it objective, it just makes it acceptable to more people. We spend our life looking to get people to agree with our opinion.

We need Leaders

“In democracy we get the government we deserve.”

French political philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville

All of this would be interesting and not very important if it weren't for the fact that our leaders are shaping the future of our world. They run our families, our communities, our businesses and our countries and we need them.

Parents, teachers and leaders are the most important jobs on this planet. Within these three roles our next generations will be nurtured, developed and educated. Their relationships with those around them, their environment, community and wider world will be guided by the leaders they come into contact with. Their behaviour in the workplace, self-esteem and mental health will all be shaped by their leaders – that

is you and me and the political and business leaders we elect and support.

There's a lot at stake.

The problem is that, as it stands at present, this responsibility is being left to a chosen few, chosen not by their skills, qualities or fitness for the job, but chosen by luck, timing, desire to be a leader, upbringing or position in life. This cannot be the future.

Too many of our leaders today, whether it be in the family, community, politics or business, do not have the emotional stability, level of integrity and expansive thinking required to do the job that we need them to do now and in the future. You only have to read the newspapers, watch television or be an employee in many organisations to see that those who are supposedly leading us are not up to the job.

This is not to cast judgment over our current leaders so that we can feel smug and righteous about it from our dining room tables. Let's be clear, being a good leader is very much easier said than done. This is why so many books are written on leadership and yet it is difficult to find a good example of leadership we can all agree on.

“We choose the go to the moon in this decade and do the other things. Not because they are easy, because they are hard,”

John F. Kennedy

Yes, you could follow the current and easy path of promotion into leadership in your career by doing what is familiar and acceptable and apparently successful in your workplace culture. You could lead your family by the accepted and familiar rules that you grew up with and that are socially acceptable. You could run for office by aligning with this party or that party and spend your time negating and criticising the other side to gain popularity and election. You could.

Yet how many people do you know who follow this path and are unfulfilled? How many leaders do you hear speak and you say “I don’t believe what they are saying”? We see it too in the work that we do with many talented people who are restricting themselves and their potential to conform to a stereotype rather than be themselves.

This is the path that so many people follow; even though they might not feel fulfilled and rewarded by it, it is the easier route, the acceptable route. The harder and ultimately more fulfilling route is to be yourself, and that takes courage, commitment and self-awareness.

So all the competency matrices in the world will not a good leader make. Personality profiling tools are useful, up to a point, and having leadership development programmes that teach some general skills are helpful. What makes a good leader, though, is not a formulaic, tick-box exercise. It will never be possible for us all to agree that ‘so-and-so’ is a great leader, that all great leaders should look like this, have this level of

education, speak in a certain way. What we are saying is that when it comes to leadership, the nurturing of the next generation and the growth of the world we live in, each and every one of us has our part to play, that leaders come in many shapes and sizes and we believe, strongly as you can probably tell, that the key to great leadership is not in a list of skills that a leader must acquire. Leadership is in the development of the person themselves, their emotional regulation, their integrity and in their ability for expansive thinking. These traits are the foundation upon which any skills can sit and be fully, effectively and efficiently utilised. This is different for each and every one of us and that is both the challenge and the opportunity that we are asking you to sign up for. We can all play our part.

Are we saying that we need more leaders or better leaders? Yes to both.

This book is aimed at you if you are aspiring to be a leader or do not think you are a leader but have the nurture, development and education of our future generations at heart. This book is also for you if you are already a leader and have the awareness, desire and passion to be the best leader you can be in your own way and in your own style.

In our work we support existing leaders to do just this and help non-leaders develop themselves, their self-esteem and their own style to step into their own brand of leadership. This has included leaders of business, charities, families and, dare we say it, leaders in their own lives.

Leadership is no longer for the select few, it is for the many. You can do it too, we will show you how in this book.

So whether you want to be the leader of the best quality business in your area of interest, create the most cohesive, energetic, innovative team or be an award-winning entrepreneur and philanthropist, we want to help you.

What is Leadership?

Throughout history, leadership has always been important and revered. Think of your own favourite tale of great leadership. Was it Churchill 'fighting on the beaches'; Boudicca standing up for her beliefs and paying the ultimate price; or Martin Luther King with his dream? Who is your idea of a leader and what is it about them that inspires you?

The thing about the tales of great leaders is that they are inspirational, they suggest qualities that no one else has. They imply that only the chosen few will be great leaders and that the skills to do it are rare, given to you at birth and your destiny.

Think Luke Skywalker in the *Star Wars* films. Given who his father was, there was little doubt he was the chosen one!

As any good history teacher will tell you, the other thing about history is that there are very few absolute facts. Stories are presented to suit the time and

they are rarely the complete picture. Churchill was renowned as a brilliant wartime leader but did not do so well in peacetime. Was Henry VIII a tyrant or a leader of his time? On a recent visit to Warwick Castle, we had the pleasure of watching Henry VIII 'on trial'. As the actors played out the roles for and against the king, it unfolded that there was a great deal of myth and historical rewriting in the history books that saw him as a womanising, self-centred, spoilt brat. There is another side. There is always another side.

Historical leaders are all 'of their time'; what we needed in the world in times past when we were landing on beaches and conquering is not what we need now. This may still be happening, but it is not happening in the same way, on the same scale and we need different leaders and more – many, many more – of them to take our world forward. The future of the world is dependent on our embracing difference, expanding our thinking and moving away from the polarised thinking of the past.

Whilst the world is getting smaller in terms of travel and communication, it is getting bigger in terms of opportunities and challenges. Even 50 years ago we were less concerned about the world outside our country, even our village. Now the future of the planet is dependent on us all doing our bit.

It's no longer big governments and big organisations who have the ability, structural size and capability to make an impact in the world. With the amazing speed of technological development, the worldwide web, smart

phones, Wi-Fi, and the explosion of social media, and more and more ways to connect with people, anyone can make an impact in the world and more of us need to. Even one person can be the leader in their niche. Countless YouTube phenomena are testimony to this.

Definition of Leadership (for what it's worth)

There are hundreds of leadership books, courses on how to be the best leader, leadership coaches and so on. Yet what is a leader? Is there a set of criteria that equals a good leader, is it skills, is it personality, is it something you are born with or develop?

Looking at a range of dictionary definitions begins to show the issue we are up against as:

Oxford English

The person who leads
or commands a group,
organization, or country.

Dictionary.com

A person or thing that leads
A guiding or directing head
A person who guides

Well, that is all very helpful in stating the obvious. So let's try something else. What do the dictionaries say about the synonyms for leader?

Synonyms for Leader

Boss, captain, chief, commander, conductor, counsellor, director, doyen, eminence, forerunner, general, governor, guide, head, luminary, manager, pilot, pioneer, shepherd, superior.

So as you can see from the synonyms, there are lots of different types of leaders, and you can already recognise that the skills required to be a commander are different from those of a counsellor, as the skills of a pioneer differ from those of a manager, or a director from a shepherd.

And to be a leader you need followers, people who will follow you. To be a leader does not require clones, fans or groupies, servants, worshippers, minions, dependents. To be a leader requires that people will follow you because you can inspire them, they can believe in you, they trust you. Whilst it still exists in families, communities, business and countries, the days of the bullying leader are numbered, thankfully. People have much more mobility than before, more self-reliance, more opportunity and access to difference and they are less and less inclined to put up with poor leaders.

Formulaic Leadership

You may know leaders (you may even be one of them) who sound like they have swallowed one of those 'this is what you say, do and need to appear as to be a leader' kinds of books. They will use buzzwords that make no sense (and most are not even English), they

are smokescreens on smokescreens; remember: 'it's a jungle out there' and 'we need to maximise the onboarding of our staff'!

These are leaders who, when in doubt, ask for more and more information and like to use long words or TLAs (that's Three Letter Abbreviations to you and me) or if you're really stuck ETLAs (Extended Three Letter Abbreviations). We might have gone a little far here – but you get the point. And let's be clear, we're not saying we haven't done some of these ourselves. We have been in leadership positions, we've followed the management-speak handbook whilst inside screaming 'This is just rubbish'. We both shudder as we write this at the thought of some of the things we have said and done. What were we thinking? More importantly, what on earth were we saying?!

In our work with leaders we have helped them unpick and unpack all of this nonsense, become their authentic selves and become Real Leaders in the Real World.

In this book we are asking you to think about what kind of leader you are and give you the tools and ideas to develop your style, the style that fits you.

What is Real? (well not a lot actually)

We've already said that we all see things differently; from there it's not a seismic leap to 'we all have a different view of reality'.

We know many people, and are sure you do too, who like to tell you that they are 'just being honest' or 'just telling it like it is'. That may well be true, the bit that's missing from each of these opinion statements is 'for me' or 'as I see it'.

We all construct our own reality, so in this book when we talk about real we mean real for you, your reality. We want you to be yourself not a caricature of yourself or a robot following someone else's accepted idea of a leader.

When you are real, when you are yourself, life is clearer, more straightforward and less stressful. You don't have to put on a show, create an image or be fake. When you are being yourself, people will see that, they will believe that you believe what you are saying whether they agree with it or not. Believability is the basis of trust and with trust you can lead. The opposite is also true. Without trust you need to control and manipulate, you have to play games, create good guys and bad guys, them and us. This takes energy, creates stress and is ultimately unsuccessful.

"Sincerity: if you can fake it, you've got it made."

Daniel Schorr

You can't fake this – people know at some level even if they don't know exactly what it is they are reacting to. It's why someone can stand up at a conference, in a meeting, over dinner and say all the right words and you just don't buy it. It's why there are some people

in whose company you do not feel comfortable, even though you can't put your finger on it. Don't let that person be you.

We all know that sometimes life is complex, that often there are not five steps to... a perfect solution, life, business, relationship. That's not to say it's not tempting. We're tempted by all the articles and books around the five steps to this, follow this and you'll be thin and how to be a millionaire by a week next Tuesday. They are attractive because we all like the thought of instant gratification and that life is a process, a series of steps that take us from A to B. Life isn't like that and we are not like that.

We are human beings, not robots, we are not logical. You may believe that you are logical and pride yourself on it, but trust us, you're not. You are a human being full of contradictions, fears, worries, as well as being full of potential, amazing strengths and skills and an infinite capacity to learn and grow. We are all like that. If you are unaware of the feelings that drive you, it's just that it's out of your conscious awareness. Our emotions are biologically designed to be internal information that helps us to make decisions and respond automatically and appropriately. Think about the word emotion, there is motion and movement in there. That's what makes us fantastic human beings (and why other people who are not as perfect and logical as us annoy us so much!).

So, we won't be able to resolve all of the issues of the world for you in the book, tempting as it may be to say

we can. What we will give you is a way to be able to resolve some of them for yourself, the ones that are important to you, in a way that works for you.

Leadership Research

We conducted a study of over 60 leaders from various walks of life who either considered themselves 'a good leader' or were nominated to complete the research by someone else who saw them as 'a good leader'. We deliberately left the decision about what a good leader was to the individual. We didn't want to define what 'a good leader' was, this isn't important (and who are we to say?). We were interested in people's perceptions of a good leader. Our leadership research participants were:

- 48% male, 52% female
- 36% had children living at home
- 70% were aged between 40 and 60
- 67% were business leaders, 15% public sector, and the rest were a combination of family, community organisations, charities, sports and other leaders

The purpose of the study was to identify what good leaders have in common, what aspects of their leadership they find challenging and what is important to them. When we began reviewing the responses we were struck by the common themes that came out despite the differences in the people completing the study.

In our leadership research we wanted to discover different people's reality around leadership and identify the issues and problems that are part of that reality for them.

The overwhelming message in the study was that there is a common set of problems and challenges good leaders face and there is a set of key traits that good leaders either have or are striving to acquire.

We have used the results of the study to shape this book so that it addresses:

- The challenges leaders face in the real world and how you can overcome them.
- The common traits good leaders have and how you can develop your own.
- The personal development needs and desires of good leaders and how you can address them.

Throughout the book we will show you how to become emotionally regulated, what you can do to develop your expansive thinking and maintain your integrity in whatever way reflects and supports you best.

In Chapter 2 we will talk in detail about emotional regulation as it is a key aspect of becoming a successful leader and most definitely in the 'easier said than done' pile.

Part 2 - Real Leaders, Real Problems

In Part 2 we will consider the common problems and challenges highlighted by the participants in our study, those potentially unresolvable dilemmas of life. We will look at the degree to which they are unresolvable; should we simply accept these problems as a fact of life for example? We will also explore and explain some of the ways in which you can begin to manage and even overcome these problems and challenges in your life and work.

Real Leaders in the Real World find two main areas of life challenging.

The first is work/life balance and time in general. Whilst some of the leaders in our study found the balance between work and other areas of their life flowed well most of the time, a lot of the comments in the study reflected that a lot of participants found this area a constant juggling act.

In Chapter 3 we will look at the Age Old Problem of Time exploring the problems that inevitably arise and were confirmed by our study. We'll look at and help you to understand how your beliefs impact your ability to make the most of the time we all have available. We will also consider how the most effective leaders look at time and provide some practical steps you can take immediately to feel more in control of your time.

Like most of us in life, the second area leaders in our survey found challenging was dealing with difficult

behaviours and certain types of people they come across in their lives and role as a leader.

In Chapter 4 we will dive into the murky world of other people and their impact on us. Most of us would like to think we are reasonable, considerate people yet there are just some people who rub us up the wrong way, behaviours that just hit our buttons and people we find it impossible to get along with. In this chapter we will explore what is happening and how to deal with this issue in a way that will allow you to become a more effective leader of a wide range of different people.

Part 3 - Five Key Behavioural Traits of Real Leaders in the Real World

In Part 3 we explore what we believe, and what our study suggests are the Five Key Traits that all Real Leaders in the Real World have.

Real Leaders in the Real World:

- Use Feedback to Succeed
- Take Considered Risks
- Are Forward Focused and Flexible
- Do what they Say and Say what they Do
- Develop Real Relationships with People

We will take you through each of these traits, explain what they are and why they are needed. We will help you to work out where your natural preferences are

and show you how you can develop them in a way that fits with your personality and character.

To support your own growth as a leader we will identify where emotional regulation might be required to help you and how you can stretch your development to get better results, build great relationships and reach the top in your chosen area of leadership.

How to use this book

Our goal in this book is not only to provide some interesting information and knowledge around leadership. We want you to be able to do something practical and immediate with what you learn. We want you to become a leader in your own right, develop your existing leadership role and have an even greater positive impact in your life and that of those you lead.

The book is therefore split into clearly identifiable and separate chapters that can be taken individually to allow you to build up your own learning and practise each of the areas step-by-step.

The book has been structured in the order we believe will be easiest and most effective for you to learn. We suggest you read the whole book through first and then go back and use the particular chapter that is most relevant either to the issues you are facing at the time or the particular area of development you want to focus on.

You will become familiar with the structure of the book as you move through the chapters. In each one, we will talk about why it is important for leaders to develop this trait in themselves, what the different aspects you need to be thinking about are and how they are displayed, and how to identify your range of abilities and scope in the area.

We will then support you to decide how you want to develop each area and give you some ways and means to achieve this. This will involve some self-reflection and bringing ideas into your awareness, some activities you can do to develop yourself and some actions you can take to continue this development or even teach to others to help them develop too.

This world needs YOU!

We need more, better-developed and more capable leaders on this planet making a difference and we want you to be one of them.

By the time you have read this book we want you to be inspired to become a leader in your own world, know how to do it and know where to go from here. You will have learned the key attributes of what great leaders do, what your own style of leadership is, the strengths and limitations of it and you will know how to develop your style to maximise your impact as a leader.

By the time you have read this book (perhaps more than once) you will be able to take the risks that are needed, respond appropriately to what's happening

around you, use feedback from the world in a way that helps you to move forward and develop healthy and mutually rewarding relationships. By being the real you, you will become a more fulfilled, purposeful and content human being and a Real Leader in the Real World.

About the Authors

John McLachlan & Karen Meager



Before they set up Monkey Puzzle Training & Consultancy in 2007, Karen and John both had successful careers in business. Karen worked in the fund management industry in London and John was a chartered accountant in practice and financial director on the board of a number of companies.

Whilst studying for her MBA, Karen became fascinated by the psychological make-up of people who are great at what they do and used her knowledge to recruit and train for all types of roles in her organisation, from call centres to sales to leaders. John had always been more interested in people than accounting and used his warm sense of humour and depth of understanding to help businesses and business owners be successful and live more fulfilling lives. Then they met.

Karen and John are not academics. What they do is take the latest scientific and academic thinking out there and make it usable. They integrate this thinking with their own experience, business understanding and psychological training, make it practical, easy to understand and translate it into something people can do something with. Their goal is that people bring more of themselves to their lives, make their lives easier and be successful in whatever they choose to do.