



**TOP 10
LEADERSHIP
TRENDS** *for 2021*

BY:

GREG KINNAIRD
Managing Director

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Greg Kinnaird

I have been fortunate enough to have assisted over 10,000 people to become successful workplace leaders in Australia, South-East Asia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates and Europe. I'm passionate about the development of emerging and existing leaders and increasing the capability of corporate workforce's. What I have discovered is the following trends are currently impacting businesses across the globe. These are: The development of new leaders Engagement and inclusion challenges.

Research shows that foundational and new leadership skills are in high demand, with the core areas of competence that need to be urgently developed being: Business acumen, Collaboration, Global cultural ability, creativity, Customer-centricity, Influence and inspiration, building teams and talent. Typically, you will find me involved in implementing Learning and Development initiatives to bridge those gaps for organisations. I look forward to assisting you to develop your people.



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TOP 10 LEADERSHIP TRENDS *for 2021*

"IF IT RAINS, IT POURS"

To say this year has been challenging for many leaders is an understatement.

This report is a summation of my findings from this year as I worked with various organisations from around the world (albeit via zoom) to develop their leaders.

These are trends which I have seen emerging in 2020 and will become commonplace throughout all organisations in 2021.

In tough times it's the leaders that people look to for direction and guidance.

As a leader your role is more important now than ever before.

This report is designed to give you a head start on 2021 and to help take you, your people and your organisation from surviving to thriving!

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS

With the shift to working from home (or WFH as the kids call it) many employees and organisations alike have seen the benefits and are continuing to utilise this model, regardless of COVID regulations.

Employee's have found they had a better work-life balance when working from home, as many people have gained back hours from no longer doing the daily commute. Plus, having the luxury of working in your pyjamas or putting on some laundry during your lunch break is always a nice perk!

However, the realities of a fully WFH workforce is not practical for every organisation.

In 2021, many organisations will flex to employee demands by adopting a hybrid model.

Whereby employees will be able to work a blend of hours from the home and from the office.

#2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Professional development is a past trend we will see continued into 2021.

Employee's need to feel like they are growing professionally within the organisation, they need to feel a sense that they are moving forward in their career.

Professional development (or the lack thereof) has a high correlation to workforce attrition.

Particularly when it comes to your high performing individuals.

In 2021 organisations need to be sure that they have a talent management solution in place or run the risk of losing their high performers to competitors.



PRIORITISING MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

#3

Prior to 2020, we were already starting to hear a lot of talk about mental and physical health in the workplace.

2020 has just amplified this conversation. 2021 will see organisations bring a focus to the mental and physical health of their people.

Those organisations that fail to embrace this will run the risk of losing talent to organisations that put this at the core of their recruitment and retention offering.

More organisations will begin to incorporate offerings such as employee assistance programs, counselling, workplace medicals, “wellness days”...etc while also embracing the informal initiatives such as building a culture around discussing stress and mental health, fundraisers for initiatives such as RU OK day, beyond blue...etc and encouraging leaders to informally “check in” on their people.

Going into 2021, leaders need to understand that personal stress is caused when a person has the inability to adapt to a changing environment.

RESILIENCE #4

I dislike buzz words.

But resilience is one of those which can't be ignored.

It is truly a necessary leadership quality required for 2021.

When we talk about resilience, we're talking about the ability to cope with the ups and downs and the capability to bounce back from challenges.

What 2021 holds is still a mystery.

The economic fallout of COVID is still yet to be seen.

Leaders must be prepared to deal with a rapidly changing business environment.

Which leads us to our next buzzword...





#5 AGILITY

While resilience is the ability to bounce back from challenges, agility is the ability to act quickly in the face of those challenges.

In operational terms, the concept of agility can be defined as a persons' capacity to gather information about changes in the environment, and respond to that information quickly.

Interestingly enough, agility and resilience are very closely related to trend number 3 - Emotional Health and Wellbeing.

Remember, stress is caused when a person has the inability to adapt to a changing environment.

In 2021 leaders need to make sure they themselves and their people know how to adapt to change and if they don't have those skills it's vital that they learn them.

EMPHASIS ON STRATEGIC PLANNING #6



Soft skills are vital but they must be complemented with strategy and execution.

Current economic affairs will force us to think of unconventional ways to sustain our organisations for the years to come.

Detailed planning, along with a proactiveness and deep understanding of the current needs, will help us to navigate the new state of the world.



It's essential to make calculated decisions, particularly now when almost every organisation is simply trying to survive.

In 2021 strategic planning will be more detailed and calculated than ever before and the post-planning delegation and communications will be critical.



#7

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ)

COVID is not the only crisis we are facing right now.

There are natural disasters, political polarisation and social unrest that is simultaneously coexisting with the pandemic.

It's vital, now more than ever, that leaders are displaying high levels of emotional intelligence (EQ).

A leader with high levels of EQ will better manage stress, communicate more effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and resolve conflicts.

The capability to remain calm and composed during a time of crisis and lead with empathy and appreciation is what people look for in a world-class leader.

In 2021 more organisations will invest in EQ training initiatives for their leaders.



#8 DISTRUST

The dramatic impact of COVID had many people questioning the information/misinformation they were receiving from the mainstream media and our political leaders.

It also hasn't helped that both mainstream and alternative media have been peddling juicy conspiracy theories. Such as:

Could the government have acted quicker to have prevented a shutdown?

Was COVID a “plan-demic”?

Has 2020 been an elaborate plan to take away our civil liberties?

Was the US presidential election rigged?

All of this noise has created market confusion and a distrust of information.

No one knows who or what to believe any more.

It has created a huge distrust in political leaders, especially in countries that are greatly affected by social unrest and polarisation.

And unfortunately, the culture of distrust has cascaded down into the workplace.

In 2021 having the ability to handle conflicts and resolve issues well, will still play a vital role in cultivating trust within your team, however, the capability to pacify distrust will be a leadership trait that will also be required for next year.



LESS IS MORE #9

In 2020 we were made to evaluate our needs in the spread of the pandemic.

Particularly during the lockdown, many individuals and organisations realized that they don't need as much to get by as what they once thought.

The looming recession will also affect consumer spending, so we cannot expect that the same kind of buying power before the pandemic will still be the same in 2021

As a result, leaders should keep in mind that consumers will spend less on wants and more on needs.

In 2021 organisations will need to align their product and services more closely to the essential needs of their consumers and leaders will need to innovate how they can still deliver results in a more effective and efficient way.

#10 SELF-CARE



Leaders and managers were among THE MOST affected people by the events of 2020.

Not only did they deal with the same stresses of everyone else, they also had to do one of the most difficult job roles, which is to lead a team!

In many organisations the expectations around that role didn't change, in fact the expectations were often increased.

So it goes without saying that many managers and leaders across the globe are feeling burnt out.

In 2021 you will see a movement of leaders embracing self care practices.

This can be as pragmatic as setting healthy work boundaries and shutting off your work phone and emails after hours, to the more esoteric practices such as meditation and journaling.

Whatever form it takes it's important that leaders are prioritising their own emotional and physical wellbeing so they are the most capable of leading others.

**REMEMBER THAT IN
ANCIENT TIMES,**

THE RENAISSANCE

**CAME AFTER
THE DARK AGES.**

A spur of great artists, thinkers, authors,
and statesmen thrived in this era.

The same will happen to us, after all,
innovation is driven by pain.

I hope these trends help to give you a head
start on the year ahead and prompt new
and innovative ideas as you navigate
through the challenges of the workplace.

Here's to a great 2021!

Greg Kinnaird

Contact Us

**DISCOVER HOW WE CAN HELP YOU
TO DEVELOP YOUR LEADERS**



info@corplearn.com.au



(+61) 0409 314 372



[Greg Kinnaird -
Corporate Learning Solutions](#)



[Greg Kinnaird](#)



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