



"RESONANT LEADERSHIP"

'Mindfulness' and 'Optimism' and Charismatic Leadership

In their recent book titled 'Resonant Leadership', Dr. Annie McKee and Professor Richard Boyatzis discuss the trait of 'resonance', which approximates to what we commonly refer to as 'charisma' and the special power of certain individuals to inspire loyalty and followership.

Most people understand the 'what' of leadership involving management, control, execution, getting results and meeting targets, but fewer people understand the 'how' of leadership which involves inspiring, driving, engaging, and exceeding expectations, and in effect, having a 'charismatic' impact on others in the way that outstanding leaders inspire followership.

Resonant leaders create an environment that allows people to give of their best, and McKee and Boyatzis believe that 'mindfulness' and 'optimism' are the two most important qualities.

- 'Mindfulness' means paying attention to the thoughts, feelings and behaviours that are serving us well and those that are not. This quality enables us to be sensitive to our own impact on others, and sensitive to what we are doing and feeling. In order to achieve this 'mindfulness', they suggest, individuals need to create quality time for thinking and reflecting on how they are impacting on others.
- 'Optimism' is the key to conveying positive emotions such as hope and confidence. In such a way, leaders are able to stay fresh and enthusiastic to deal with new challenges by keeping focussed on the big picture rather than the minutiae of specific tasks.

The authors cite former US President Bill Clinton as a highly developed 'resonant' or charismatic leader. Clinton networks effortlessly, pays close attention to people, picks up the moods of meetings easily, and creates strong interpersonal bonds by establishing strong personal contact and by creating the positive impression that he is going to make a difference.