**LEADERSHIP SPEECH**

**FOR**

**LEE BROOMHALL**

**AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP**

Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for that very kind and impressive (**use this if it fits**) introduction... now I just have to live up to that glowing description! (**Wait for the laugh**). I also want to acknowledge that this is the afternoon and you have had an enriching, event filled day replete with information, innovation, mental calisthenics... I know you might want to take a break and possibly take it easy, and to that I say... If Britney Spears can make it through 2007, I think you can survive this session!! (**Wait for the laugh**) ... As leaders... and we all have the capacity and potential to lead... we find ourselves in countless situations every day in which we have choices and options in how we act and react... those situations range from small decisions and guidance to larger shift changing declarations. We can either choose to accept the challenges placed in our paths or we can choose to not accept them..... however, you are all present at this workshop, so we know in which group to find you. In order to prove one's effectiveness and in order to channel confidence... in order to mitigate... and in order to guide intended missions to fruition... no matter how seemingly minor or important, one has no choice but to be authentic. "To thine own self be true..." it's a phrase we've heard throughout our lives.... it's time to examine, define, identify, and declare the authenticity of leadership that lies within us in greater or lesser degrees of dormancy and activity. It's time to access our own greatness for the good of our selves, our families, friends, communities, and country.... wherever you might find the need and opportunity to stake your claim and advance a cause or outcome.

Marcel Proust said, "The voyage of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes." Throughout life we may not truly see circumstances for what they are. We may be too close to a situation to think we can respond effectively, but my purpose today is to work with you to find the way to be able to access our "inner technology" that identifies us as the true leaders we are. Each one of us has the potential to make a meaningful and lasting difference in the world around us. Each one of us has the power to observe, consider, access our gut instincts and react in a proactive manner. It's been said that "Leadership is not so much about what you are doing... it's more about who you are being." And truthfully everything you need to know about yourself and your innate ability is with you all the time. You just have to be able to see with new eyes... to use the lessons you've learned and the experiences you've lived through to inform your future participation in the world around you. ... The process is perpetual, and like works of art, as human beings, we are truly never "finished." Although we may be complete, there are always new layers to reveal, new lessons to learn, new methods to test our abilities and effectiveness, and as long as we are alive, we continue to refine our skills, our effect on our surroundings, and our purpose.

In an article found in Forbes online, (**the author's name is Margie Warell if you want to mention this**) the author discusses five different ways in which leaders ... and potential leaders, can unlock authentic leadership. We can take this as a beginning... a starting point... Five descriptive words are mentioned: **Genuine, honest, courageous, resilient, real**. Each one of us has the capacity to operate within these five realms and in fact it's the place in which everyone should dwell, and when you think about it, each word can be a synonym for "authentic." We have all heard the theory that "There's no one else out there," and that concepts of attraction and identification draw us towards what we relate to and what we project. If you are to be a leader, start by leading. Declare yourself with truth and credibility. The essence and foundation of authentic leadership comes from who you are, and who you are authentically is a person of honor and integrity... that's the wellspring to which we must connect.

The five points the author mentions in the article are as follows:

* **SHARE AUTHENTICALLY**-**Be truthful and insightful.**  Although we have a natural tendency to protect ourselves in order to preserve our selves and our resources, it is when we exhibit the dimension of vulnerability coexisting with our strengths that people can begin to relate to our message. This doesn't mean to arbitrarily shirk responsibilities and commitments. It means that if you fully assess a situation to the best of your ability and you have reservations about how to complete the task at hand, voice your considerations. A gesture like that illustrates a more rounded image of your thought process and your consideration of the issue in question. It demonstrates a willingness to view all aspects of the task, and to overcome your concerns.
* **EXPRESS AUTHENTICALLY**- **Speak and act from your unique point of view. Acknowledge your point of focus.** While the article reminds us that Margaret Thatcher said, "You cannot lead from the crowd," and while it's important for a leader to identify with his or her group, a true leader must have the determination to distinguish that voice inside of them that guides them through issues and projects to completion. It is the unique vantage point and courage to step forward that supports a leader to self-identify. While it's necessary to have support from one's colleagues, one must also be willing to inhabit the more lonely space of the leader. Someone has to....
* **LISTEN AUTHENTICALLY-BE PRESENT**- Okay.... how many of you are sitting there in **RAPT ATTENTION...** hanging on my every word? And who out there is going .... "Uh huh?" See the difference? (**Wait for the laugh**). A long time ago I was taught a simple adage, "If you want to be interesting, **BE INTERESTED**." Now that's not to say that authentic leadership is a conditional state. It's not. But if you want to be a good, effective, respected leader, it's essential and **URGENT** that you pay attention. Listen to what people tell you... it doesn't matter if those people are clients, superiors, assistants.... whomever... **LISTEN**. You don't know everything. Every interaction in life and in business provides an opportunity for further personal understanding as well as understanding of the messages and motives of others. As you become more attuned to your own inner messages, take a breath and take the time to listen to those around you. Generally speaking, everything we need to know is usually right in front of us at any given moment. Be aware, be observant, pay attention, and **LISTEN**. Drifting and daydreaming are reserved for other parts of the day. In a leadership situation, it's **imperative to focus,** and if you're having difficulty doing that, then make a mental note and address it at the appropriate moment. You will find the natural extension of really **listening** because you're **fully engaged** is a greater willingness for your team to cooperate.
* **ACKNOWLEDGE AUTHENTICALLY- UNLOCK THE POWER OF APPRECIATION.** We all tend to criticize, either in the moment or after the fact. We also know when a comment or a recognition is gratuitous. We don't like it and we know comments like those are a colossal waste of time. When a leader comes from a place of authenticity, it is natural to acknowledge and empathize with sincerity. As authentic leaders, we learn to consider the whole, complete situation, issue, or incident. And while a "fire sale" on compliments is not needed or called for.... after all, frequency dilutes the intent, an earned comment of recognition goes a long way. ... another old adage... "you get more flies with honey..." how do I remember these? ( **Wait for the laugh**) provides a brief analogy... not that I encourage you to walk around with a honey jar dripping all over the place (**Wait for the laugh**) but you get the point. Be a good, strong leader.... but give credit... and acknowledgement when and where those comments are due. The article also goes on to quote results from a Gallup poll that reported that over 65% of employees throughout the world get discouraged as they think their efforts go unappreciated. An initial response to that might be, "Why do you think it's called **WORK?" (Wait for the laugh**). Another response might be considerations that with too much praise, employees might become coddled and develop an outsized sense of entitlement. .... but **REMEMBER**... the authentic leader knows how to read the situation and respond.... while being appropriately vulnerable, attentive, and focused on the task, the employees' abilities, and the benefits and drawbacks of praise. We are also reminded that acknowledgment doesn't necessarily just have to be a response to performance. If colleagues and employees bring a certain unique talent, viewpoint, or skill to a project, that might be cause for recognition.... in appropriate, respectful, and sincere doses.
* **SERVE AUTHENTICALLY- UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF YOUR WORTH, THE VALUE OF YOUR PARTICIPATION, AND THE IMPACT OF YOUR EFFECTIVENESS**. Anyone can take the reins in a project, but if it's for the wrong reasons and motivation, the impact will be fleeting and probably empty. In addition, those involved will be deprived of an authentic experience of working with a true leader. A real leader is the one who fundamentally understands the meaning of service, and that comes from a foundation of knowing the importance of guiding a team to a positive, effective, meaningful success. As an example, for people who are in sales, and ultimately, we are **ALL** selling something... whether it's ideas or material goods; concepts or other points of view, we know what happens when a sale doesn't work... when the deal isn't reclosed... when it falls through. An essential part of working with others as a leader goes back to listening, empathizing, and serving the person on the other end of the conversation. To be effective means to listen, to absorb the other's considerations, and to serve the outcome for the greater good. It also has do with being vulnerable, being engaged, focusing, listening, and strategizing for the benefit of the whole global aspect of the project.

Now we have a description of just some of the aspects of an authentic leader....let's explore what it is about YOU that self identifies as a leader so that you can evolve into one that is authentic. The former First Lady of the United States, Eleanor Roosevelt, who was, in her own right, an extraordinary leader, said, "One's philosophy is not best expressed in words; it is expressed in the **choices** one makes... and the choices we make are ultimately our responsibility." A true authentic leader knows that, in his or her own gut, that it is up to them and no one else to get the job done... or as Ester Lauder, the visionary and beauty entrepreneur put it, "I never dreamed about success. I **WORKED** for it." Iyanla Vanzant has also said, "The way to achieve your own success is to be willing to help somebody else get it **first**." The old fashioned expression, "A chain is only as strong as its weakest link has gotten a **makeover** in modern times. The authentic leader knows that if his or her team is not a success, neither is he or she. In this world that is moving so quickly with so much to learn and so many layers to define and accomplish, it's essential to know that we cannot do most of what is required alone. To function in an isolated atmosphere is to dismiss our potential. To identify a spot... a condition... a purpose, and to serve one's team and one's purpose is what life and contribution are all about. A true and authentic leader is informed, agile, willing to be at the vanguard of discovery.... for better or worse... and inspires confidence and a degree of trust

At this point you might be wondering about my heritage, my history and how I got here.... because let me tell you this.... your roots and early experience of your family, your life, and your education can have a tremendous impact on your calling professionally and as a leader.

I don't know if there's an actual "leadership gene," but I **DO** know that I come from a proud and inspiring heritage. I guess you might say that the women in my family were strong and they either intentionally or reluctantly made their mark on their world and subsequently, ours. My great grandmother defied the times in which she lived and along with her fellow Suffragettes, she fought for the right to gain the vote for women back in 1913 in the U.K. Before you begin to look at me with a sidewards glance, rest assured.... I was told that she was one of the **peaceful** enthusiasts! (**Wait for the laugh**). Her work and leadership influenced more than a generation. Her dedication to her passions and causes was rare and inspirational. She instilled a sense of purpose and an innate strength to the members of her family. Her daughter, my grandmother, raised three children and owned and managed a bookstore in Perth in the 1940’s – through to the 1960’s. In 1969 she was arrested from the bookstore for having refused to remove the book Portnoy’s Complaint. She was wholeheartedly against censorship and she believed in a customer's right to have the choice to select the literature they wanted to read. As she was fiercely independent, she refused legal counsel and represented herself in court. Luckily for our family, the bookstore, and the freedom of the press, the case was thrown out. My grandmother had a passion for her work and an unflinching set of principles that supported a person's right to choose. She loved what she did; she stood by her word and her bond, and she maintained and upheld her commitment to openness and honesty as she continued to work in that bookstore for more than twenty years.

And so we get to me. Growing up in a family of strong positive female role models clearly had an impact on my life, my actions, and my choices.. I grew up with the stories of the generations that preceded my and was guided by the principles and ethics of my great grandmother and my grandmother, two women who were way ahead of their time. They understood the meaning of education and personal responsibility to uphold and demand human rights and how that is a natural extension of leadership, and the DNA that inspired own special calls to action eventually motivated my own pursuits. My parents continued the tradition of raising children to be the pro-active movers of the future. My brother and I were encouraged to express ourselves and that anything we might choose to pursue and accomplish was achievable... as long as it was for the greater good. We were taught that nothing was off limits in the pursuit of our life's work as long as we found our true calling and really loved what we did. Our parents have always been realists who did not sugar coat the potential obstacles we might encounter on our path to professional and personal fulfillment. They were both quite candid with us, openly discussing that we were about to enter into an adult world filled with conflict, prejudice, ignorance, racism and injustice.along with other forms of bias that threatened to have an effect on our lives. I am so grateful that both my brother and I were raised with this kind of awareness, and combined with the legacy of my "maverick" great grandmother and grandmother, we were taught to honor diversity, embrace challenges, and remember that the Golden Rule was the foundation of a meaningful life. We learned to respect all, no matter the color of their skin, the number of zeroes at the end of their bank balance, their physical abilities or limitations, who they chose to love, **IF** they chose to love, or their ability to be "normal...." whatever that **might** be.

You can see my upbringing provided a foundation and a road map for me to find my voice and follow my purpose within a community that needed those very strengths. I was given the gift of s strong sense of justice and I was determined to share my purpose with those that needed to be heard and respected.

As I mentioned Estée Lauder earlier, I will invoke her wisdom again. She didn't **dream** of success. She **worked for it**. When I applied for the job at Workpower, I had just finished my social trainer’s qualification and was ready to work. I had seen a listing for a job support worker and there was this catch phrase on the advertisement that said "Support people make their mark in the world." And for some reason that resonated with me, after all... my grandmother and great grandmother must have been watching over me!! I was ready and willing to do what it took to make my mark. I drove my 1978 little red Toyota Corolla over to Workpower’s head office in East Perth. I brought my mum with me, left her in the car down below, and bounded up the stairs. I got the job, I was twenty-one years old and I was ready to conquer the world.... but how? Over the next five years, I worked earnestly to learn every phase of the business. First I was a supervisor, and then a manager; I worked across all divisions of the organization. I volunteered for committees and projects, I was hungry to learn all that I could and I was eager to gain experience and to accept responsibility. Estée Lauder would even have approved!! (**Wait for the laugh**). I took as many opportunities presented to me as I could. I innately knew that in order for the company to succeed, I had to have a personal stake in its success. I knew that in order to serve effectively, I had to understand the functioning of as many "working parts" as possible. I was guided and encouraged along the way by colleagues that would ask, "Are you going for that job, I hope, Lee?" They believed in me. I sat at the executive table at twenty-six. I felt valued, respected, encouraged, and that just motivated me to do more and invest more of my skills and energy into the purpose, mission, and positive impact that drove and distinguished the Workpower forces and ethic.

The access to opportunities presented to me over this period of time were significant, but I want to clarify.... as someone once said... "if opportunity isn't knocking, then **YOU** build the door." I developed a reputation that allowed me to be able to walk into my boss’ office and say, "I’ve had an idea," and he would say, "You go for it Lee." I was completely trusted..... I was given a rope... to either hang by or to use as reins to guide our projects. I was relied on to make decisions, to explore new ways of doing things. Because I was brought up through the ranks to be trusted and encouraged, I now give that same trust and opportunity to make decisions and explore innovation to my people... that's just one example of how authentic mentorship leads to authentic leadership, continuity, and a matrix for continued professional growth and success.

Please keep in mind that it wasn’t always happy days. We had tough times to get through. (**Name one or two incidents that tested your strength and abilities**). I will never forget when \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. But with determination and a plan, we got through it. And we didn't always agree... Some of us would go head to head at the executive table. But there was always a difference between intellectual debate and personal attack. We respected each other’s differences, personalities, leadership styles. So, when we left the room, we still trusted each other, because we had each other’s backs. I felt respected and that goes a long way. My colleagues taught me every day what it means to be part of a team, whether observing, leading or executing the task.

I have always been driven by our mission and the work we do. I have never had a job in all these years with Workpower that I haven’t loved. I believe in our cause and the positive impact and lasting results we achieve as we create opportunities for people. And that is timeless and always needed. But when I bounded up those stairs at East Perth all those years ago, with my mother waiting in my car (**you can say**) ... don't worry... I left a window cracked open and she had some snacks (**and wait for the laugh**), never did I imagine that I would one day be the CEO of the entire organization. It never entered my mind. Why would it? I wasn't there to climb a ladder. I was there to make a difference and to serve... and as I continued to define my purpose and follow my conscience, my mission evolved.

At the time I hadn't thought I would be a CEO because I wasn't in touch with the ambition to be one. And there is nothing wrong with being ambitious, or not immediately knowing the future that would define me, but to me, the passion I have for the work, the drive I have to continue it... the urge to see and be a part of what's next... the **ownership** for the mission that I related to so early on... that’s why I am the CEO of the organization. It was the evolution of opportunity for me to continue this work that I believe in that drove my trajectory.

Over the years, in the different roles that I have held, I have learnt a great deal from each and every one, and each position provided insight, unique vantage points, and valuable lessons. But there are two things that have always remained consistent; 1 - my personal belief in the work we do. Some people may call that a passion. I call it drive, and 2 - my passion for our contribution to the work world and to our clients.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate that our drive, our passion, our natural curiosity and motivation to contribute lies within each one of us. It is when we bring our personal touch and our own unique resources to the task that we have the potential to really serve as leaders and make an indelible impact. Leaders aren't necessarily born, but they... and you, all possess the natural resources and potential to inspire and take the helm... and as long as that drive is sourced from authenticity and a passion to be willing to constantly learn, grow, and serve, then you're on the right track. True and authentic leadership requires stamina, resilience, ingenuity, willingness to accept responsibility, and an investment in trust.... in people, in purpose, and in results. Being a genuine leader is not just a gratuitous gesture. It can't be a hollow commitment. It involves the acceptance to roll up one's sleeves and the ability to do any job required within the organization.... after all, how can one expect to direct if one doesn't know **WHAT** and **HOW** to direct? And being an authentic leader requires learning from one's own life experience... no matter how benign one might have thought that was. In hindsight, even the simplest of encouragement serves to inspire us.... remember that teacher who gave you that pep talk twenty years ago? You remember it? Well, guess what? That experience stayed with you and informs your life and abilities even today. We all have those little moments that hold greater significance than we've allowed ourselves to accept. And each of those moments... even the negative ones, shape us and spur us on to motivation. As the saying goes, "I am part of all that I have met." Not one of us operates in a vacuum, and as long as we're alive, we have personal history upon which to rely and the potential to serve and to lead.

I encourage all of you to channel your inner authenticity to find your own route to greater, more meaningful, and more authentic leadership inspired by your own unique story, service, teamwork, and be prepared to make an impact on our workforces and communities for the greater good of our families, friends, and partners. Thank you all!