



CollectiveIQ

Helping teams think together



The Space Between

The Futurist, Gerd Leonhard, has described the current COVID-19 pandemic as "The Great Transformation".

We are in what others have called "The Space Between" as we are witnessing the dismantling of the old ways but have not yet moved into new ways of operating as businesses or even as a society. This can cause enormous anxiety but also offers hope if we are willing to sit with not knowing and eventually embrace the new.

However, it requires us to take stock and question what we are doing and why. As with any major transformation in our lives personally, we can only grow when we are able to honestly re-evaluate our previous assumptions, keeping those that are aligned with the new world, and being prepared to let go of those that are no longer of value.

This means as leaders we have to "rewire" leadership not at a superficial level, but at a deep transformative level as human beings.

"Only a crisis – actual or perceived – produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable"

Milton Friedman

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What does this mean in practice?

To put it simply, more than ever our role as leaders is to help our people:

- Learn to work together
- Trust each other
- Act as one

The medium may have changed but the task remains the same.



In a thought-provoking webinar recently[1], four futurists discussed what the world might look like for businesses post-COVID-19.

There were two main points I thought were particularly helpful:

1. The way we deal with employees, customers, stakeholders today will define the relationships we have in the future. Keeping this front of mind protects and deepens our relationships and therefore our businesses.

2. At the same time leaders are at risk of being overwhelmed, and so need to manage their time and energy as efficiently as possible. For every decision faced, leaders can ask themselves:

- Will this support our people/customers? (empathy)
- Will it help our liquidity/cash flow in the short-term? (survival)
- Will it drive digitisation?(innovation)
- Will it build strong relationships? (interdependence)
- Is it inspirational? (purpose)

The answers to these questions can help streamline the decision-making processes we face and ensure better decisions are made more often.

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Finally, in this period of transformation, perhaps there is some comfort in the fact that what is called for is actually what we are built to do as humans – to connect with each other, share ideas, and explore the unknown with the curiosity of the pioneers that preceded us.

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7xxeATjjnX4&t=2295s>