



Action stations

BUSINESS SENSE by TIM KELLY

The repair industry is an ever-more intriguing place; this applies equally to every company I have worked for where you assume those above you know what they are doing.

You would think any business that puts managers in place in the workforce would know how to “lead” and that, you might think, would be to further the aims of that business.

I have never experienced what I would describe as a “good boss” and certainly all of them have been lacking in some leadership skills. The interesting thing is, all of these businesses appeared as “dictatorships” rather than “leaderships”, down through every strata of management.

When you run your own business, you soon learn that you spend more time learning how to run a business than providing whatever service set you on your path.

People presume that to be a leader you need to be the person in charge, yet anyone can be a leader. It is about taking control – “leading the change” – and this can be any person in the business.

When you see something that can be improved, why not take action and do it? That is leadership ... you take action, others will follow your lead.

In doing this you will inspire others

around you. If you are the business owner, you need to empower your employees to be able to do this without fear of reprisals. Processes are great within a business; they provide consistency, but humans need to be allowed to be creative and not stifled by fear, or unrealistic targets and performance management. Reward them for their ideas and input.

They need to be working for the benefit of the company. To do this, they need to be “on your journey”. The only way you can do this is by sharing your vision. This can be a life-goal vision, 10 years, five years or whatever we need this week, but they need to know what benefit their work brings to others and to themselves.

Outside of business, the same applies. I am always on a journey of self-discovery and education, and have always been an avid reader, but the more educated I have become, the more I realise how little I know.

Some books stand out. Tribes by Seth Godin is one such book, and you do indeed need to find your “tribe” – those of a like mind with a shared vision. But a book I have recently finished, Leadership Wisdom From the Monk Who Sold his Ferrari by Robin Sharma, made me wonder why businesses are not giving this to their staff to read? My advice ... buy it.

Inspire those around you by setting an

example, your environment will not change if you do not change it. Not happy with the repair industry or the power imbalance insurers have over repairers? Change it! I mean you, the person reading this. Get off your backside and take action!

Here’s a shout out to some who are: You may not like him or what he does, but Anthony Heard from Braintree Motors is taking action. Darren Swann has created Crashclinic and livestreams every Tuesday night on LinkedIn and Facebook; he is taking action to engage the repair industry; Chris Weeks at the NBRA has properly been banging the drum to raise awareness about the industry at government levels and in the media.

And, of course, *Bodyshop* mag is always pushing, changing the content to be more engaging, relatable and educational along with creating new collaborations (and on that, I look forward to seeing you all at the *Bodyshop* magazine summer BBQ and in their lounge at Automechanika in June).

Personally, I have always followed my own path and have taken no notice of the naysayers. I have my own “tribe” and have a vast number of followers. Does that make me a leader? It was never my intention to be one, but I do hope to inspire people, to empower repairers to lead the change and, most importantly, to take action.

