



“How can self-awareness and self-reflection ignite a farmer’s motivation to engage in Leadership?”

A journey of discovery



A report for the New Zealand Nuffield Farming Scholarship Trust

Ben Allomes 2016

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Abstract

Changing economic and social pressures in the rural sector mean farmers need to change the way they act and react to challenges if they want to survive and thrive. Strengthening rural leadership has been identified as a key opportunity to help farmers to respond and adapt to their changing environment both on-farm and within their wider sector. From the findings of my research, self-awareness and self-reflection are two recognised traits that show strongly in farmers who are performing well in leadership positions. The link between self-awareness and leadership is strong (Musselwhite, 2007), but the understanding of this link by farmers is limited.

By understanding their past, their experiences and actions, and connecting that with their personality type and leadership style, farmers will be more empowered and prepared to step into the leadership roles that are required to ensure the agriculture sector remains vibrant and adaptable in the future. When a farmer makes time to learn about and reflect on their past experiences, it creates a lightbulb moment.

This lightbulb moment creates an ignition of thought which stimulates them to seek what they need to learn about their leadership style and where they are best suited to contribute their leadership skills. Everyone has the potential to be a leader, whether in their own personal business or the wider sector. To understand this and make a conscious decision to place themselves in an area that is best suited to them, farmers then ensure their effort will provide the biggest benefit to themselves and those around them.

Foreword

I'm a farmer. I have been all my life. Black and white, science based. Practical. Dirt under my nails and tan lines in the summer. I talk about the weather and prices, I shuffle my feet. I stand in circles at discussion groups and ask the odd question. I have a dog. I haven't worked a "real" day unless I get my hands dirty. And I'm far too busy to spend time talking about my feelings. To go from this stable, sensible, "agricultural" way of behaving, through the process of Nuffield, to someone who is studying, thinking and talking about self-awareness and self-reflection and its impact on an individual or business has been a huge mind shift for me. It's just not what we talk about on the farm, or think about or make time for. Or is it?

So why bother getting to know about this stuff, why go and get all touchy feely? Part of this shift in thinking has come from my wanting to understand my own journey, and my wife Nicky's. Part of it is about wanting the best for my children. Part of it is being sick of the frustration I have when I can't get a message across or the guilt I feel when I upset someone when I didn't really know why. Part of it is about wanting to know why I act and react in a certain way to things and why others react differently. Part of it is trying to understand and communicate with somebody, whether to get them to perform, engage or to buy into something. Part of it is about having a higher performing business. Part of it is about having a clear vision for my family, with clarity and purpose that ensures we all are doing what we are doing for the right reasons, leveraging off our strengths and having the maximum positive impact on those around us.

'Its soft stuff but it's hard to talk about'— John Redpath

I'm extremely grateful to the people who have opened up and shared their stories with me. I hope I do them justice. Most of them have never thought about this stuff before, let alone spoken about it. The messages are thought provoking, the stories are real. This is my journey, my findings and my translation of all the mind bending, thought provoking, touchy feely stuff I heard, read and talked about over the last year into my language, a language I connect with and one that I hope you will connect with too.

Best of luck, see you on the other side.

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The problem

To clearly define the message I want to convey, I needed to distil my thinking into a phrase that I could relate to that provides context and relevance. This was challenging for me. I have discovered I am a big picture person, nailing down a sentence to me is like pulling teeth. It's not my personality, I need space.

Wrong.

Upon reflection I realise that I need some rules; I need a bit of rope to allow some freedom, but not too much. I've found out that I need to put a bit of effort into creating a process to follow and then to give my mind the freedom to do its thing. As I grappled with new ideas, conversations and theories, it wasn't always clear in my mind the areas I should be focusing on. The challenge was creating the link between theory and reality and communicating it in a way that connects with us – the agricultural community.

Below is the problem I have identified and framed up from my travels, research and thinking and I believe it sums up what I am trying to achieve with this paper.

A farmer's desire to participate in leadership is being constrained by a lack of critical self-reflection and self-awareness, which is affecting the performance of their business and the performance and perception of our wider agricultural industry

Out of that problem I created a question that I have now attempted to answer.

"How can self-awareness and self-reflection ignite a farmer's motivation to engage in leadership to create positive change in their business and/or industry?"

My report aims to:

1. Set the scene around my definition of leadership and the introduction of personality styles.
2. Explore and discuss the impact and effect a person's past can have on their actions and perceptions today.

3. Discuss how this new awareness will then help to ignite a motivation to learn more about who they are now and where they fit in the world, to then be able to create positive change in a business or industry.
4. Tie it all back together with recommendations to the reader and the wider industry as to how we can go about creating and implementing change.

I will not attempt to discuss how business and industry performance can be directly influenced by this increase in self-awareness, rather I will focus on various aspects of self-awareness and how one can become “self-aware”.

I will also not discuss the scope or quality of the various leadership courses in New Zealand, or the benefits a person can get from attending them. This area is well known and I am not questioning the efficacy of any of these courses in New Zealand.

My aim is to generate thought which will then generate demand for a person to decide for themselves what the next step in their journey will be.

Leadership

What is leadership and how does it connect with self-awareness?

I feel I must first define leadership, in the context of my report and my belief of what leadership is. Defining leadership in itself is hotly debated and can be interpreted in many ways. Below is the Oxford Dictionary definition, what I would call the base definition:

“The action of leading a group of people or an organisation, or the ability to do this”

Oxford Dictionary

My definition of leadership is more about how an individual can connect with being a leader. I believe leadership is more focused around:

A person’s understanding of why they are who they are and consciously using this knowledge to create positive change for themselves and for those around them, in a way that is unique to them.

There should be no differentiation in the recognition of the value of a person's leadership contribution, whether they are the Prime Minister of New Zealand or the Secretary of the local school fundraising group. Everybody has a role to play in their business, community or industry and can make a contribution unique to them to create positive change. It's a matter of understanding what role a person's skills are best suited to and being confident that that contribution is having a useful effect and is unique.

"The more you know, the more you realise you don't know" (Freeman, 2008)

The more I learn about myself (self-awareness) and critically reflect on my past (self-reflection) and the impact it has had on me, the more I will learn about my "style", be it personality type, strengths and weaknesses, what pushes my buttons, and so on. This is a very personal journey for all of us to go on, be it alone or with somebody else. As you proceed through with me, you may feel challenged; you may question why you are who you are, like I did. But remember, as was mentioned earlier – the soft things are often the hard things to talk about. The more self-aware you become, the more you realise you are not self-aware. It's a bit like jumping into a bowl of jelly, before you leap everything is clear, based on your world view. Once in however, everything becomes murky. Everything you thought you were you begin to question. It's a struggle wading through thoughts and experiences. But then you begin to line a few things up. Some ideas and experiences start to make sense. Now when you climb out the other side, to your new normal, things are clearer, your foundation is stronger. Your increase in confidence that comes with that understanding is ready to help you step up and be involved – you are more self-aware. This process also occurs during a crisis. There are feelings like anger, resentment, and acceptance to deal with. You will be challenged and as you emerge, you will be more able to deal with the next crisis or opportunity that presents itself.

"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid." — Anonymous (Anon., 2016)

I really like the quote above and its connection to a person's strengths. Leadership needs to be viewed in much the same way. When the definition of leadership is stereotyped into a

certain style, *for instance* when a leader who can charismatically convince a crowd is compared with a thoughtful more introverted personality, then a lot of people with great leadership potential feel marginalised, believing they are not leaders and don't have what it takes. They don't see their own leadership potential and its connection with their personality style. Everyone has leadership skills and potential. They are just displayed and implemented in different ways. But does everybody have leadership desires?

I had an interesting conversation with an Irish dairy farmer about this topic. He was a quiet guy, non-assuming but good at what he did. I asked him if he thought of himself as a leader. He said no. I asked him what he thought the definition of a leader was. His interpretation of leadership was around a person who puts themselves out there to be at the front – a chairman or industry spokesman. So I asked him what he was interested in on his farm. He talked about the environment and the things he was doing in that space, he also talked about a milk quality competition he had entered and was a finalist for. I then asked him if he had spoken to people about what he does and why. He said he had people ask him about his tree planting and effluent management, that he had a field day about the milk quality competition and that people were genuinely interested in what he was doing. He even had visits from Nuffield scholars. I asked him if he thought what he was doing was influencing others or creating positive change - leading. He thought for a while then answered with a smile, "I suppose it has".

I really like this story as an example on how the perception of leadership can marginalise potentially great people. If this dairy farmer had a little more understanding about who he was and where his strengths lay, he would not only have greater confidence in himself, but would have an even greater influence on his industry and community.

"Success is about creating benefit for all and enjoying the process. If you focus on this & adopt this definition, success is yours." - (Kim, 2015)

Personality styles

The industry built around personality typing is huge and well understood in academic and the wider professional world. Birds, animals, colours and actions are all used by different companies to explain what type of personality a person has. Very interesting and very useful when trying to understand who you are and how you behave. But how can this relate to leadership in agriculture?

The connection between personality types and leadership in agriculture is somewhat understood but where I think where we are lacking in understanding is in the implementation of this knowledge. Organisations like DairyNZ build some of this into discussion groups and conferences. But there are plenty of opportunities to provide a far greater impact.

I met with Marije Klever, 2015 Nuffield Scholar from Utrecht, Netherlands, who completed her Masters at Wageningen University, The Netherlands, on the role personality types play in agriculture.

Marije, did her Master's thesis on "Styles in the dairy business; an analysis of strengths, vulnerabilities and sustainability of dairy farms". She found that there was no "one best way" to farm. What she did find though, were people who understood their farming style and leveraged off their strengths, sustainably grew their business in a way that best suited them, more so than the farmers who didn't know their style. She broke down farming styles into four main types, and found that although each type grew differently, using completely different strategies, they were all equally successful and resilient. Those who were not as resilient were those that grew in a way that was not suited to their style.

The opportunities these findings could provide for New Zealand agriculture are quite exciting. To be able to create a program that connects solution to personality types, I believe will be a more sustainable way of creating practice change.

For example, the dairy industry has developed 5 basic dairy systems (DairyNZ, 2016) ranging from fully self-contained, System 1 (low input) where the entire business operates from within the farm gate, to System 5 (high input), where over 25% of the cows' diet comes from bought-in feed. What we haven't done, however, is connect the system to the personality and strengths of the farmer. This connection could happen naturally to some degree, but

there is the potential for farmers to follow a path that is not connected to their values and strengths.

Understanding “me”

In the first two sections I have introduced leadership and personality styles. I now want to connect these with self-awareness, or the

“Conscious knowledge of one's own character and feelings” - (Oxford Dictionary)

As a way to try to understand and connect my findings to reality, I have broken this section into 3 parts - the Past, the Present and the Future. Musselwhite, 2007 discusses the effect self-awareness has on career development and says that “self-awareness is being conscious of what you're good at while acknowledging what you still have yet to learn. This includes admitting when you don't have the answer and owning up to mistakes.” He also mentions how the past can impact on future prospects “Most likely, your strengths are what got you to this point in your career. As your role in your organisation changes, you must be careful not to overplay a former strength to the point that it actually becomes a weakness.”

To increase my self-awareness, and my desire to engage in leadership, I must try and understand who I am today, what my strengths and weaknesses are, why I do what I do and how I can leverage off that to help me in my future. I must also understand how my past affects who I am today and why and how I can leverage off that to increase my chance of success, not just in a business sense, but as a person too. With that knowledge I must then take some personal responsibility for myself and my future actions.

Understanding my past...

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it” — George Santayana
(Santayana, 2016)

The impact of past actions and activities on the behaviour and thinking of a person, both positive and negative is profound. The implications of these actions can be felt for generations. As explained later in the paper, the past creates prejudices within us that influence how we act and behave. This then in turn affects our relationships, actions and performance.

To understand the effect the past has on an individual, and how this has impacted their actions today, I interviewed 45 farmers, academics and industry leaders, both male and female, covering a wide spectrum of agricultural businesses both in diversity and performance, spanning 7 countries. Selection was either through recommendations from other farmers or academics, or through chance meetings and conversations.

I asked them to tell me their “story”, something that most had never been asked to or had never shared before. By using storytelling as an interview technique (Zhang, 2016), I was hoping to get more authentic discussions and information. I felt that if the interviewee was more at ease, and could tell me their story in their language, it would enable me to capture information or themes that couldn’t be captured in a more formal process. I did, however, have some questions, choosing to use them as a prompt rather than a guide.

The 4-Step Process

The results were astounding. As we talked, very quickly a pattern began to emerge, a pattern that very clearly linked why these individuals were performing the way they were, why they made decisions in certain ways and why they were involved in the things they were involved in. Interestingly, a number of the interviewees were not aware of how their past had impacted them and their current actions. Rather it was more by “accident” that they were doing what they were doing. Without exception, every person connected with these steps, and when I discussed the findings with them later, they too were amazed with the accuracy.

At completing my interviews, I spent time reflecting and re-reading my notes. From this I noted down areas or themes that came up during the conversations. I then distilled the information from the interviews I conducted into four key themes. These themes emerged as being necessary conditions to succeed, and I have attempted to explain them below. I have called it The 4-Step Process.

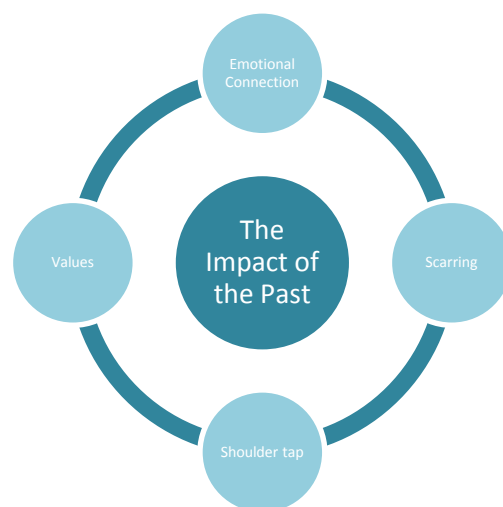


Fig.1: The Four-Step Process

Step 1 – A Strong Set of Core Positive Values

Every person I interviewed had a strong set of positive values they connected with. This was usually instilled during childhood, but not exclusively, and there were numerous mentions of parents, ministers, neighbours and uncles, farmer organisations, social and church groups and who the person looked up to during their formative years. The fact there was **no specific** role model link implies the values and role modeling can come from any quarter. These values are

included in the word cloud below (Fig.2) where the larger the font of the word, the more people identified with the specific value.



Fig.2: Values Word Cloud

Where negative role models were discussed, several mentioned hearing and being around people that had negative values. The overwhelming response to these environments was that they had made the conscious choice to connect with positive values not the negative. It was difficult however, at times not to be led into negative thinking by those around them. They did, however, eventually reconnect to their values and continue on their journey. This was quite evident with people who had pulled themselves out of bad situations. The courage and strength to make a stand and say no was very challenging, but very rewarding for those who made the step. These people often found their journey quite lonely.

Where positive values were recognised and connected with by an individual and woven into the fabric of themselves or their business, the performance and direction of that individual and/or their business was much stronger. Where positive values were held by the person but not consciously recognised, business performance was good, but not as good as the others. These people intrinsically knew they were doing the “right” thing (by their personal values), but never formally connected it to their business plan. These individuals made more, poorer decisions and were slower to react to change, but did hold to what connected them to their values.

The importance of values really hits home when the business or individual comes under pressure or is stressed, or where opportunities arise. When these situations or stressors occur

they all reverted to their core values, and these values determined the types and speed of decisions that were made and the actions taken.

CASE STUDY

Farmer: Marcello – Montesa Farms

Country: State of Mina Gerais, Brazil

Farm Type: Potato, Grain, Coffee

History: Marcello's business was one of the most impressive I visited in my travels.

His is a first generation business, started in 1989, and is situated near Uberlandia, Brazil. Montesa Farm is 15,000 ha and at



1250 metres above sea level makes it ideal for potatoes, which are supplied to McDonalds, Brazil. Coffee is also grown, contracted to Italian brand Illy, along with soya and other grains. The business employs 490 people, has its own school (personally built for his and his staff's own children as there was no school in the area), laboratory and nursery.

Marcello is very motivated to participate in helping his staff and community succeed "the minds of the people are different" says Marcello when questioned on why he invests so much in his community "It's important to get everyone pointing north".

Strong values are at the core of Montesa. So much so that his business vision and strategy is built around three sustainability pillars – Social – Environmental – Technological. These pillars are built into the business plan and are evident throughout the business. The pest management plan is focused on controlling pests, not eradicating them, by promoting natural enemies and using safer chemicals. He also sprays only when pests become an issue, not when they are first identified.

Long term relationships with staff, suppliers and customers was very important to Marcello, based on trust, quality and integrity. He believed strongly in standing beside his people and business associates but was not willing to sacrifice his core values for a deal or person. His mantra was "doing the right thing at the right time".

For me, what set Marcello apart from the rest of the businesses we visited was his attitude, which stems from his core values. A number of farmers I met spent a lot of time discussing issues and problems – staff quality, regulations, prices and the climate whereas Marcello was always focused on the positive. He knew the environment he was in and the risks that he faced, but he had a strategy to deal with them. This meant his time was always focused positively on his business. This is not to say that he didn't have bad days, or that farmers who focus on issues have poor values, its more to say that because Marcello had clarity of vision, built on a strong foundation of core values that were integrated into his business he was able to deal with the issues strategically to allow him to focus more on the opportunities. (Marcello, 2015)

Step 2 – Emotional Connection

An “emotional connection” or to a job, industry or subject featured very strongly in the interviews. This emotional connection was often referred to as a passion. It became very clear that the stronger the connection, the more committed the person would be to push themselves for the success of an objective or business. When asked to reflect on their earliest memories, connecting them to what they are passionate about, most people could remember an event from when they were between the ages of 5 and 12 when they really connected with what they do now. This timeframe was not exclusive however, as some developed a connection later in life. These later connections related more to how agriculture connected with a person's values which then created an emotional connection. If family time was important to a person, then a career in agriculture could be seen as a way to achieve the fulfilment of that value. This connection could not be explained by some, rather they had a feeling they should be doing what they are doing.

A number went off and did other jobs, even trained and had careers in completely different sectors before returning to the sector where the connection was first formed. So powerful is this connection, that when made aware of it, one interviewee actually thanked me, teary eyed, for helping her to understand why things had been so difficult for her. She was encouraged to enter and be part of a trade and it took 15 years before she finally built up the courage to leave, re-train and do what she truly enjoyed.

To connect emotionally with something makes us go over and above what is normally expected or required. This is what gives people the strength to succeed when others fail, to never give up when others do. It's what sets the great apart from the average.

It was also clear that having an emotional connection seemed very important in the volunteer space. Many people I spoke with were involved in "off-farm" activities. A lot of these were as volunteers, giving their time for something that they knew benefited their community or something they were attached to. To commit valuable time to a cause gave people a sense of satisfaction, which helped to motivate them in other areas of their life.

By understanding where this connection comes from, we are able to understand better why we do what we do and why we react to situations differently from others. A person with a strong emotional connection to something is more resilient to negative comments or tough times than somebody with weaker emotional connection.

Rather than leave the industry during a tough time, those with a strong emotional connection to what they were doing adapted their business to suit the environment. This occurred more rapidly to those with stronger emotional connections. This was because they were both more aware of the impact of change on themselves and their business but also they had a better sense, or read, of what was going on around them.

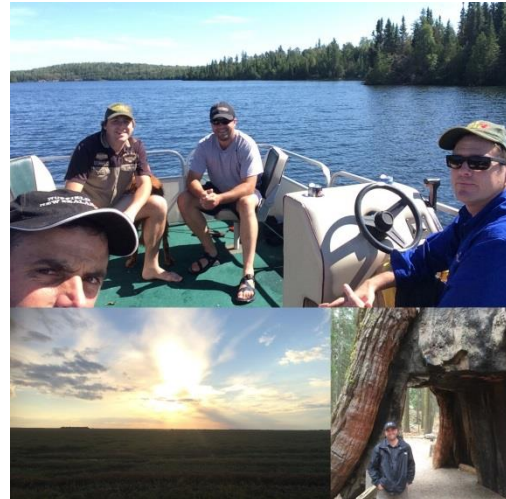
CASE STUDY

Farmer: Colin Hudon

Location: Winnipeg, Canada

Farm Type: Mixed cropping, Investment
Fund Management, Property Developer

History: Colin grew up on his parents beef
and cropping farm. His earliest connection
to agriculture is still very clear to him.



Colin remembers a time when he was five, feeding cattle in a shed with his father. He said he can picture exactly where in the shed he was, what he was wearing and what they were feeding the cattle. He clearly remembers that was the time when he decided he wanted to be a farmer. He said he didn't know whether his father knew that was a defining moment for him. For all he knew his father could have been in a rush, worried about the jobs he had to complete that day, annoyed that he had to look after his son, but for Colin, that was when the connection was made. That was when he decided he wanted to be a farmer.

Colin's father passed away while Colin was still in his mid-twenties. It was a very difficult time for him and his family. Because of the connection he had to the farm and to agriculture, he said, even though it was a big challenge being so young, he felt drawn to come home and be part of the family business. Today, though still farming, Colin has sold the family farm, which was in a remote area of Saskatchewan, and moved his family closer to town and where he has expanded their business to include property development and other agricultural investments. Agriculture still does, and always will, remain a central hub to the business because of the connection he has with it, and the connection he wants his family to have. (Hudon, 2015)

Step 3 – Scarring

As the interviews progressed, an interesting trend started to show around the effect of a crisis, setback or a negative experience in one's past had on an individual. These negative experiences usually occurred during childhood or their formative years and had a profound effect on the way an individual viewed the world around them. Without exception, for the high performing individuals in my sample, these scars provided extra motivation to achieve, be it in their job, industry or personal life.

As can be seen from the following quotes, the examples of scarring are quite real and in some cases still quite raw. Some had a profound impact on self-worth and confidence and often took many years to overcome.

"My careers advisor told me not to waste my skills being a farmer – I showed him"

"My Dad was never at home when I was growing up, he was always out working – I didn't want my kids to go through that"

"We never had a lot of luxuries growing up – I'm going to make sure my kids get what they need – what's the point otherwise"

"I was told I would never amount to anything"

"Go and get a trade – that's where job security comes from"

"You'll never be able to own a farm"

"Sorry, we won't be able to finance you on this deal"

These sentences, sometimes throw away comments, really had significant effects on the individuals. Most could explain in great detail what they were wearing, where they were, how old they were when these words were spoken. They even talked of certain smells, songs or other prompts that brought flashbacks into their minds. So powerful was the effect that many of them have amassed huge businesses or wealth and for what, to prove someone wrong, or was it to prove themselves right? It became apparent that actually sometimes the most driven, motivated person actually had the deepest scarring, the most to prove.

What the scarring actually did though, was create a prejudice about a certain thing. The individual then made the choice to use that prejudice for positive or negative outcomes. Having a set of positive values (Step 1) and the emotional connection (Step 2) to what they were doing meant when times were tough the fall-back position was actually to use it for

good. Sometimes, as discussed in the case study below, that prejudice continued on for many generations, unknown to those being influenced.

What was really interesting was those who had scarring, but also had a strong emotional connection to what they did, didn't actually leave the industry or job they were connected to, rather they sought to change the way they behaved or approached the situation to ensure that negative experience didn't affect them more or flow on to others. Many people consciously organised their business or life to ensure this scarring pattern didn't occur. In one example, from Ireland, the interviewee said they grew up in a family where their father was always working and they felt they missed out on seeing him during their childhood. They deliberately structured their business in such a way that they were able to be around with their children. They still loved farming so didn't blame or leave the industry; rather they decided to control their situation to make it work for them.

Those who had a weaker emotional connection to what they were doing used the scarring or bad experiences as a catalyst to get out of it. Because there was no real connection to what they were doing they chose not to change a negative situation, rather they chose to move on and do something else.

If we take this a step further we actually see some risk associated with the scarring of an individual. As my travels progressed the anecdotal three generation rule was mentioned several times – that is – the first generation gets it, the second generation grows it and the third generation loses it. This rule was originally intended to be used to describe the build-up and collapse of intergenerational business and is somewhat anecdotal, but when applied to scarring it becomes quite relevant.

If this rule is unpacked and converted to the context of scarring, we see that if the first generation performs a certain action or activity, usually out of necessity or ignorance, this then creates a negative flow-on effect to the next generation. That second generation then gets the motivation and drive to ensure that it doesn't happen to them (e.g. risk of bank foreclosure so put in place risk management strategies). This second generation then sets up the business (working extremely hard to grow the business and while also trying to create a balanced life) to shield the third generation from the scarring and ends up over-compensating for their scars thus creating a third generation with a greatly reduced connection to the family

business. The third generation, who have been somewhat sheltered, are not genuinely aware of the risks and consequences so are bolder and make riskier, often less-informed decisions. Therefore the probability of the business failing is higher. They struggle to connect with the reason why Dad or Grandad did what they did.

From what I have seen, all high performing individuals have had some form of scarring or setback in their past which has increased their motivation to succeed. How they have leveraged off that has been the difference to those who haven't succeeded. Those without scarring didn't have as much drive or motivation to succeed, but that didn't mean they couldn't, it just means their drive was not as great.

So the question is, is it possible to be successful or high performing without scarring? I would argue scarring is a vital component to success. What was not clear is the depth or level of scarring that is required to act as a motivator. However, from my interviews, the interpretation of type and depth of scarring was completely up to the individual. What had a major impact on one person might not even be noticed by another.

CASE STUDY

Farmer: Paul Hyland

Location: County Laois, Ireland

Farm Type: Dairy Farmer

History: Paul milks cows on their family farm, with his brother and their families.

When I met up with Paul he showed me around his farm and we talked about his

system and his future plans. We somehow got onto discussing the role education plays in his business and Paul explained how all of his family have been through University and all of his children will be going to university "education doesn't finish until they have a degree". I questioned Paul where the motivation for higher education came from, but he was unsure "we just do it"

After walking around the sheds I was invited in for a cup of tea. Inside, I met Paul's mother, in her mid-70s and the matriarch of the family business. We started talking and I asked Mrs



Hyland if there was a time in her life when she could remember a defining moment that had a significant effect on her. She struggled so I asked her if she could remember a time when education had an effect on her. Her eyes lit up and she proceeded to tell me how her brothers and sisters were allowed to go off to school and University but how she had to stay home on the farm and miss out on the education she badly wanted.

Today, Mrs Hyland is still on the farm and has, with her sons, built a very successful dairy operation but because of the scarring created by missing out on going on to higher education, she has instilled in her family a culture focused around higher education. This has passed from her children, to her grandchildren and most likely to her great grandchildren. The impact of that action has been phenomenal; demonstrating the power negative actions have on us but only if the individual is willing to use the prejudice for the positive rather than the negative. (Hyland, 2015)

Step 4 – The “shoulder tap”

Probably the most influential and important step of the four steps, and probably the most undervalued in New Zealand Agriculture, is the understanding of how other people have influence on a person’s past. Having someone see something in you that you haven’t seen in yourself is a very powerful tool and resource. The role of mentors was vital to the success of the individuals interviewed. The subtle tap on the shoulder or the blatant kick in the behind was mentioned regularly as being a key driver to success by the interviewees. At this point I want to make it clear I am not talking about an “old boy’s network” where things get done on a nod – “you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours”. I am talking about genuine identification of talent or potential by someone who has experience and respect and is interested in seeing people progress – a long distance pseudo-mentor.

Motivation and the desire to succeed increased hugely when a second party became involved and showed an interest in someone’s future. Whether the other party was directly involved, as in a Life Coach, Mentor or someone close, or whether they influenced indirectly or at arm’s length, the desire of that individual to succeed became even stronger.

This influence, or shoulder tap, occurred through a variety of ways. People mentioned being “bailed up” at conferences, talked to on farm visits and industry meetings. A lot were invited to events either as guests or to meet certain people. Some had phone calls and personal visits.

The way the “tap” actually occurred had no relevance on whether the individual stepped up or not. What caused that to occur was:

1. The status and respect held of the person doing the shoulder tapping
2. The frequency of taps and the number of different people doing the tapping

These two points highlight the need for validation by an individual. Validation removes some of the fear associated with putting yourself out there, but only comes when there is respect or multiple people involved. The fear of failure greatly diminishes if the perception is that someone else thinks you can succeed. Having Grandma say you would make a wonderful industry leader doesn’t have as much impact as having the Chairman of a Board come up to you and say they see potential in you.

The tap on the shoulder had the greatest effect on a person’s self-awareness and created “lightbulb” moments for them. It got someone out of their comfort zone, causing them to make more fundamental changes. Whereas a focus on values and the emotional connection to something drove evolutionary practice change, the shoulder-tap more commonly created revolutionary practice change. Evolutionary change is change through small steps, over time. Revolutionary change is major, fundamental change, in a short timeframe (Borwick, 2013). People were more willing to make major change in their life or business if someone else backed them or believed they could to achieve it.

One of the greatest points I got from the interviews was that those who had recognised they had been shoulder tapped had a lot more motivation to pay it forward and shoulder tap others when they got the chance.

CASE STUDY

Farmer: Don Cameron – Terranova Ranch
(Cameron, 2015)

Farm Manager: Patrick Pinkard (Pinkard, 2015)

Location: Helm, California

Farm Type: Grower of 25 + crops including conventional and organic and biotech. Tree nuts, vegetables, seed crops, cotton and hay.



History: I visited Don's farm twice during my study period. My first visit was while I was travelling on my Global Focus Program. 10 scholars travelled to 7 countries over 6 weeks visiting 80 businesses, hearing about their strategies, business plans and seeing their businesses in action. Don struck a chord with me because of his attitude, manner and because of the way he worked with, motivated and mentored his team. Terranova Ranch is a mixed ownership model, irrigated cropping business, growing over 25 crops and employing 65 permanent staff and large numbers of contract pickers when harvesting crops.

When I visited a second time, Don talked about his staff philosophy. One area of interest, which relates to shoulder tapping, is his strategy around employing interns from the local Universities for summer holidays and putting them into management roles because he has "got the scale to be able to put people in learning spaces"- Don Cameron. Don's style is to be "aggressive, innovative and challenging" and he feels by bringing these interns in, he has a symbiotic relationship – they get real time management experience and challenge, and they get to challenge Don on his practices.

Don left me with one of his interns, who was about to be employed fulltime, for a couple of hours saying "ask him anything", again, an indication of the trust he had for him and the challenge he liked to create.

Patrick comes from a farming family and was attracted to agriculture by his High school Ag teacher. He came to Terranova because of the opportunity and the challenge. Don had a reputation for challenging people and Patrick saw being selected as an intern there as validation that he had the right skills to be successful. There was a very strong mutual respect

between the two, built by trust in each other's ability. At 23, Patrick considered himself young to be in charge of so many people, but he felt surprised at how well he was doing and that his team looked up to him, some of them much older than him. This gave him confidence to believe that he did have the right skills required to achieve his goals in life. To me he seemed quietly confident, safe in the knowledge that someone backed him and gave him the chance to step up.

To Don, Patrick was a very personable guy, willing and very capable to do what was expected of him. When I asked him what he thought Patrick's strengths were, Don said "he makes them feel like they belong" – a reference to Patrick's attitude when dealing with his team. He also mentioned how he "always looks at the future, not the past" and is an "educated risk taker". The dynamics between these two people clearly demonstrate how a tap on the shoulder can affect a person's career, their attitude and their performance.

Summary

As can be seen, when it comes to understanding who we are, it is vital that we understand and connect with our past. It sounds simple, but we are who we are for a whole lot of reasons, and to try and distil that into four steps is almost unfair. What I believe I have done, is create thinking points for an individual to reflect upon, with the hope that it will create some sort of connection of why I am who I am, and why I feel the way I feel. Only when that is understood am I ready to genuinely begin to learn about who I am today, how I relate to others, what my personality type is and therefore what my leadership capability is and how it can be best utilised.

The Present

Now that we have an understanding of the impact the past has on us, it is important to understand how we can then leverage off that for the benefit of us today. It's one thing to understand our past; it's another to use this knowledge to help us in the present. From my interviewing I have identified four areas where having a clearer understanding of the past can help influence how a person can then leverage off it to the benefit of them today. These four

key areas below have a significant impact on a person with regard to their self-awareness and their desire to participate in leadership:

1. The “lightbulb moment”
2. Understand your strengths and weaknesses
3. Personal development
4. Communication

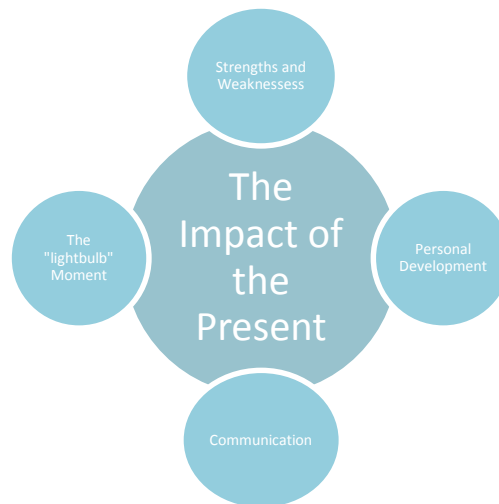


Fig.3: The impact of the Present

The “Lightbulb” moment

In this section I want to explore the concept of “lightbulb moments” otherwise known as ah-ha moments. This is the moment when you click on something that seems so simple. It is what I believe to be the ignition point of a new idea, a way of thinking, a desire to change. These moments are very powerful as they create connection between past experiences and what could occur in the future. What makes a specific point in time, the time a person decides to put their hand up and get involved in an organisation, community group, or make a dramatic life-change and how can that be influenced or encouraged?

Remembering my initial question

“How can self-awareness and self-reflection ignite a farmer’s motivation to engage in leadership to create positive change in their business or industry?”

So how does self-awareness and self-reflection help “ignite” a farmer’s motivation to engage? Lightbulb moments are an outcome resulting from the conscious self-reflection by an individual of an action or activity, be it a success or failure. Both positive and negative outcomes can create the same effect. This reflection is focused around analysing the event, what when wrong, what went right, what has been learnt and when consciously related to past experiences and future goals. Thus a lightbulb moment is triggered which then ignites the motivation to engage. As a person becomes more self-aware, this process occurs more regularly and intuitively. Self-reflection then becomes the status quo process for ensuring lightbulb moments are not just one-offs, rather the start of a process of continuous improvement that becomes the status quo for a particular individual.

If a person can get to this place of recognising that status quo is actually continual development and improvement, then that will be where the greatest leadership benefit will be given by an individual, either to the benefit of their own business, community or sector.

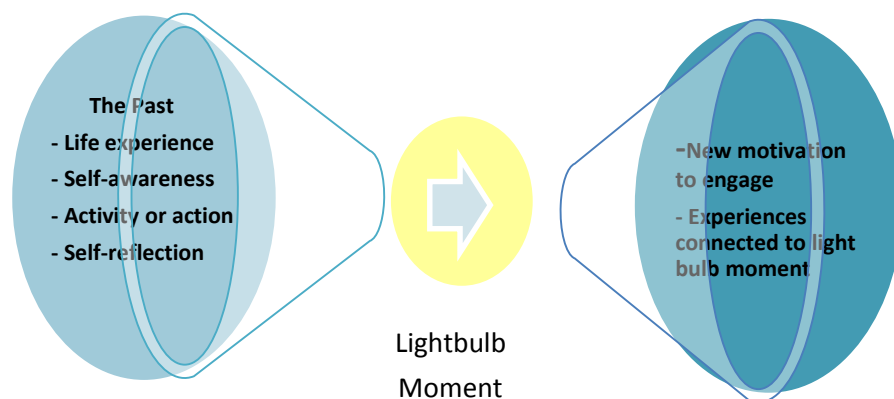


Fig 4: The lightbulb Moment

I met with Tiffany White, Associate Professor of Business Administration at the University of Illinois, and Marketing psychology expert and discussed the concept of lightbulb moments with her. Tiffany talked about problem recognition and gap awareness as being common psychology processes that follows on from the development of need recognition in a person. Put simply, marketers manufacture a need (artificially create a lightbulb moment) within you through their advertisements (problem recognition) then try to connect that need with a

product they are trying to sell (gap awareness – what am I like now vs what will I be like if I buy this product). This can be done by a variety of techniques but the effect is to ignite a feeling of need or want that can then be satisfied by the product or service being sold.

This approach is used everywhere in our sector, from selling alternative fertilisers to encouraging farmers to change their farming style to be more profitable. These techniques work, not always well, but they work. (White, 2015)

When it comes to trying to promote on-farm practice change (i.e. industry good bodies promoting a more efficient farming practice) or to encourage people to step into leadership roles, this traditional marketing technique doesn't work. Everybody has a motivation to do something, but for everyone that motivation is different. If we want farmers to uptake a certain practice change or take on certain leadership roles but only market around a specific point, like making more money, only those who connect with making money are likely to hear the message and get involved. Messaging needs to be connected with the "why" of the individual farmer.

Simon Sinek's Ted Talk, "Start with Why" (Sinek, 2009) talks about how great leaders inspire action. He says they help people understand the "why" we should change, not what we should do or how we should do it. To promote practice change by connecting with a farmer's "why", rather than their "what", we can communicate in a way that is more likely to be successful, and enduring. This "why" needs to be connected with their core values, beliefs or understandings, developed out of the 4-step process.

"Offer someone the opportunity to rebuild a company or reinvent an industry as the primary incentive, and it will attract those drawn to the challenge first and the money second."

- (Sinek, 2009)

An opportunity to try this is in the Industry good space. Typically a "seller" identifies a need and creates a product or service to fill it. They then try to convince the "buyer" it is what they need. The buyer doesn't always recognise that need for the product or service because it either has no relevance to them or they are not actively seeking it, so nothing happens.

The seller then invests a lot of resource (marketing) into convincing the buyer that not only do they need what they are selling, but they need to continue buying it into the future.

Presently, in agriculture, a typical process would be as follows;

Scientists identify a problem or opportunity for farmers. Developers then create a solution to that problem and marketers then try and convince the farmer that it is in their best interests to undertake that opportunity. Be it a financial management course or HR training sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't.

Farmers are usually independent and self-directing, whether it be in their daily life or with their learning or professional development. It's their decision to change or engage, not those around them. They all have their own learning/decision-making styles and past experiences so I don't believe we can successfully motivate another person to undertake practice change just by marketing to them, no matter how good the opportunity is. Anecdotally, it seems that traditional marketing methods don't work very well with farmers when focusing on practice change rather than selling a product. There are a lot of great courses and programs that could add thousands of dollars to farmers' incomes if they were adopted, but they are not.

Changing the practice of farmers is a huge undertaking, especially when livelihoods and deep seated prejudices are involved. I believe as an industry we need to add a new approach. This approach will aim to stimulate demand from the farmer up, rather than the industry down.

If a farmer can understand their own decision making process and learning style and how their current actions are influenced by their past experiences, then that can help them to understand how their actions today can help them achieve their own goals and visions - a lightbulb moment. This lightbulb moment can then act as a catalyst to empower them to search out the skills or training required to help them achieve their goals, i.e. create demand for self-led practice change. This will then help to stimulate demand for the products and services already developed for them. By creating farmer demand by increasing self-awareness and reflection, I believe a stronger willingness to learn will occur, resulting in more successful practice change.

I have discovered the light bulb moments are created when past experiences and events come together at a specific point in time to create a new idea. By using the information we have

learnt from the 4 step process about our past, we can then stimulate our own “lightbulb moment” with the aim of connecting our past experiences with why we are who we are. With that knowledge and confidence, or self-awareness, we can then consciously choose where the right place is for us to participate in leadership, be it within our own family, business, community or the wider sector.

Work on your weaknesses or leverage off your strengths?

A question I asked a lot during my interviews was around a person’s strengths and weaknesses. I asked people if they thought if they were better to leverage off their strengths or fix their weaknesses. I did this to try and understand how a person’s strengths and weaknesses relate to self-awareness and what connection there was between self-awareness and performance relative to those strengths.

Interestingly, the younger or potentially less self-aware the person was, the more focus they put on fixing their weaknesses, as these were the things that had the potential to hold them back in their career or business. As life experience and/or self-awareness increased, the answers changed to focus more around a person being better off to leverage off their strengths rather than fix their weaknesses. This was so they could maximise their strengths and therefore their potential to achieve their goals faster.

When I analysed the different answers, I came up with what I believe is the perfect answer:

*You are better to know and understand your **weaknesses** and have a plan for dealing with them, so you can focus on leveraging off your **strengths** so as to give you the greatest benefit*

I concluded from my interviews that generally, as people aged they became more self-aware. Those who had leadership training, regardless of age, were more self-aware and were far more likely to understand the link between their strengths and weaknesses and how to leverage off them.

The next step I took was to ask people what they thought their strengths and weakness were. I did this to see if they were aware of what their key capabilities were and if they genuinely were leveraging off them.

Every person could tell me their weaknesses. That was the easy bit. Not many had a genuine handle on their key strengths, yet when discussing the previous question the people who said they were better to leverage off their strengths actually struggled to identify what they were. I had a few debates about this with different people. The discussion usually focused around “oh it’s the *“insert country here”* way to not big-note yourself”. I somewhat disagreed with this.

From what I have seen, I believe it is more to do with the person’s awareness of themselves and who they are, especially in relation to others. Weaknesses are easy to see. You see the bad in yourself and compare it to the good in someone else. To further back this up, the people I spoke to were excellent at identifying the strengths in someone else, but not in themselves.

Strengths are a little trickier to understand. Because your strengths are so natural to you, so simple to do, a person naturally assumes that anybody can and does do what you do – why wouldn’t they, it’s easy. What they don’t see is that yes, for them, it is easy but for someone else, what they are doing is amazing and is a real strength. People underestimate the value of what they see as mundane, everyday stuff and struggle to see that what seems simple and mundane to them is actually unique and beneficial – a real strength.

The higher performing people, who were also the most self-aware, were the most able to articulate clearly what their strengths and weakness were. They could articulate what their plans were to deal with their weaknesses, whether to attend training or to employ someone to cover their area of weakness. They also had a clear understanding of what their strengths were, and were placing themselves, or building a team around themselves to enable these strengths to be maximised, if not enhanced. This then gave the greatest benefit to the business or sector they were involved in.

To be able to genuinely understand your weaknesses, and have a plan to deal with them and then to know and understand your strengths is actually a real challenge. By doing it, then reflecting back on them on a regular basis, the increase in self-awareness and therefore performance potential that can be achieved, creates amazing opportunities for individuals and businesses alike.

Personal Development

When I googled personal development (PD), which is different to professional development, there were nearly 16 million results. PD rolls off the tongue like dagging sheep and milking cows. In today's modern world it's on-trend, but how do I as a farmer navigate through the minefield of what's available?

Rural support businesses are beginning to understand better the need for personal development in their teams and are getting involved more in PD. Bankers, fertiliser company reps and the like have well developed training plans and processes.

In general, farmers are slow adopters of PD. There are a lot of courses available in New Zealand, especially with the recent increase in life coaching and mentoring programs. Organisations like Federated Farmers, New Zealand Young Farmers, industry good organisations like DairyNZ, Beef & Lamb and Horticulture NZ, and the major banks have recognised the need for personal development and rural leadership. They are investing in developing and running courses to try and increase the capability of those within our industry. Creating demand is difficult. Personal development continues to be a challenging area in which to create momentum.

Why is that? Is it the cost? Some of us have money in the budget for training our teams, but how many farmers have budget items for their own development, and not practical skills – personal ones! Should it be seen as a cost or an investment? It's hard to put a value on something you can't see, the soft but hard issues. As I mentioned at the start, as farmers we tend to be practical, black and white. Why do we need to spend money, hard earned money learning about soft stuff?

I also think it's partly due to the isolation and individualist nature of rural communities and our working environments. In the corporate world, senior managers watch over the new interns, identify talent, tap them on the shoulder and fast track them through PD courses.

In a lot of rural environments, farmers spend a lot of time operating in silos, unaware of another person's PD needs, and more than likely unaware of their own. In previous decades, with smaller rural based companies, cooperatives and larger communities, people with potential were shoulder tapped more regularly as there was more interpersonal interaction. With the removal of subsidies in the mid 80's and subsequent rural downturn through the 80's and 90's, the reduction in leadership investment in rural areas (e.g. New Zealand Young

Farmers), the reduction of rural populations and the amalgamation of rural companies, this opportunity greatly diminished.

Today, with increased industry investment in PD and leadership development pathways, the advent of social media and other tools, these silos can be, and are beginning to be broken down. Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook are connecting a new generation of farmers to each other at a very fast rate. From these connections there is huge potential for social media to be a conduit for mentoring (shoulder tapping) and encouraging and promoting talent. This talent and potential can once again be recognised and nurtured, just now in a different format, but we need more structure and more planning. Social media can only be good for our industry, and it must not be overlooked.

The final issue I want to discuss in relation to PD is lack of time. It is easy to say we need to make time, but with today's busy schedules and tight operating margins, it is very difficult to find time for PD. It is critical that it happens though.

Most of the farmers I spoke to had a PD plan but all said they had difficulty sticking to it. The level of structure and detail in their plan varied but it was recognised as being important. Some mentioned the need to put a line in the budget for PD. "We should block some time in our diaries for PD and for reflection time." How and when that occurs is over to the individual. The main point they made around frequency of PD was to make sure it occurred regularly. Continued Personal Development is a step change in thinking. It is the recognition that nothing is status quo. The World is continually changing and farmers need to change with it. To think that a person does not need to seek continuous improvement is the start of a slippery slope to failure.

Below is a list of personal development pathways and learnings from people I interviewed over my travels. They are in no particular order, and will not connect with everyone. The list is not comprehensive by any means, rather a catalyst for thought and discussion.

1. Know your strengths and weakness
2. Understand your psychometrics and how you can leverage off them
3. Personality typing – pair up with someone similar and opposite so you understand how you communicate and how you can communicate with others
4. What are your motivations? – What is important to you?

5. Experience everything from riding in police car/social stuff to business stuff to industry to international. Know your position and how you influence your world
6. Develop a world view
7. Understand your story – why are you who you are – life graph but deeper.
8. Understand your emotional connection to what you do.
9. Networks and connections with others in the industry – connections are about understanding what we can do to help each other start
10. What type of leader are you?
11. Do something new every year
12. Shoulder tap others

Communication

Treat others the same way you want them to treat you – (Luke 6:31)

It stands to reason that, after becoming aware of the impact my past and present has on me, then if I am who I am because of it, you must be who you are because of your own story.

To effectively communicate, I must not only understand who I am and why, I must also understand who you are and why and then choose to communicate with you in a language that you understand. We all know the story of an instruction being given to someone, conformation of understanding is received, but the person goes off and does something completely different. Frustrating, but very common. Why does this happen?

The sentence below may give a few clues. This sentence is considered to be the next step on in communication. To communicate effectively it is critical I do the following;

Treat others as they want to be treated - Anonymous

The message here is don't focus on treating others how you would expect to be treated, focus on treating them how they want to be treated. To put yourself in someone else's shoes and view their world through your eyes is one of the worst things we could do. We know their world is different to ours, based on their past and their present experiences so

why would we want to understand them through our eyes? Who are we to put our prejudice onto them and assume we “know” them.

Genuine, effective communication is a very difficult art to master, but as our self-awareness and motivation to try increases, it does become easier. The rewards are huge for those who master the art.

The Future

So now we know a little bit about leadership and personality styles. We also know how our past can influence our present and how understanding it can ignite that desire to get involved. But how do we really know where we should put our energy, where do we get involved? What ties it all together so I know that what I'm doing is right for me? – should I be helping with the local school fundraising group or should I be going for Prime Minister?

As a person becomes more self-aware, they have a clearer understanding of their values, strengths, weaknesses as mentioned earlier, but unless these are connected to a vision, they are just interesting things to know about you. So what is a vision and how does one get created?

Vision: “The ability to think about or plan the future with imagination or wisdom” (Oxford Dictionary)

In the context of this report, a vision is a picture for where you see yourself and your family in the future. It connects what is important to you to how you are going to achieve it. People I interviewed said they saw their vision as a light they were aiming for, bright enough to still shine through even in the dark times, when they encountered self-doubt and challenges. Because of the strength and belief in what was right for them, they were able to plan and execute far more strategically. Those who had the strongest vision, or picture of success, had the most clarity as to why they were doing what they were doing. It gave them the confidence they were doing “their thing” for the right reasons, reasons that were right for them.

It was also mentioned to me that when there is clarity of vision, either personally or in a leadership context, decision making becomes easier. Does this opportunity fit into our vision and business plan? Yes or No? Are we still on the right track? Yes or No?

The sooner a vision is created by a person, the sooner they will get clarity. The more closely that vision is connected to their core values, beliefs and attitudes, which occurs through increased self-awareness, the more successful they will be in achieving that vision.

Those who lived the closest to their vision had it written down or had it posted on the wall in their office. Because they lived and breathed it every day, it was real to them and they were motivated to ensure they achieved it.

There was an interesting discussion I had a few years ago that springs to mind when I write about this section. I can still quite clearly remember a conversation I had with quite a free thinking man about children and their career choices. He told me we should never ask a child what they want to do when they grow up. He said it puts them on the spot too much, backs them into a corner and forces them to make a statement that is far too specific for a child to make. This then teaches them to focus on quite a narrow pathway. I questioned him further on this and he said we are better off to ask a child what they don't want to do. Asking someone what they don't want allows for more freedom to work out what pathway is right for them by removing the pathways that are definitely wrong. If a child, or young person, can consciously recognise what they don't want, then they are learning to become more aware of who they are and what their needs are. This skill is vital for any person, regardless of their age and stage in life.

I shared this with a few people on my trip and have found an even better technique. Ask a child or young adult what "picture" they have for their future, and then how does a career fit into that. Their picture needs to include family, social, environment and financial, not just career. Don't ask them "what do you want to be?" ask them "who do you want to be in your picture?" To define a person only by their career is out of date. It is time to move on and what better place to do this than with the next generation.

What is this picture – it's a vision, and that vision is what drives us to do what we do. We need to help nurture a vision for our children's future, not steer them down a career path that may not necessarily connect with who they want to be.

Conscious choice

Conscious choice is about understanding why a person makes the decisions they do. It's about being aware of what is around you, what is in you and what influences you and understanding how that connects to a decision that has been made (Sen, 2012). We hear information; we interpret it in the language that we understand based on our world view and our life experiences. We then use this information and experience to make a decision. It is up to us to choose the information we use when making a decision. We don't know what we don't know, so we can't use information unknown to us, but we can choose to ignore information that is known to us and discount it from our decision-making process.

"A conscious choice is the one that you make in full cognition of reality without being influenced by pressure induced externally or internally" (Sen, 2012)

The act of making a conscious choice or decision then is based around a person taking some self-responsibility and understanding the reason for making the decision. Here is the catch, the meaty bit of this report.

There has been a lot of information provided in this report, stories, experiences and opinions. As the reader, you have read a lot of information, and hopefully you have been challenged to do some thinking. The ball is in your court. What you choose to do with this information is up to you – Do you choose to use it and leverage off it to help improve your leadership, business or personal skills or do you choose to ignore it and walk away.

Either way, you will now be making a conscious choice to do either. You can knowingly choose to start or continue on your personal journey, slightly more self-aware than you were yesterday, or you can knowingly choose to walk away. Either way it is your choice, your responsibility, not mine or anyone else's for that matter.

Conclusion

My initial statement at the beginning of the report was:

A farmer's desire to participate in leadership is being constrained by a lack of critical self-reflection and self-awareness, which is affecting the performance of their business and the performance and perception of our wider agricultural industry

Our agricultural sector has faced and will continue to face challenges. For it to be resilient and prosperous, it is not the challenges we face that will define us, rather it will be how we choose to face them. The capability of our people will determine our success. The more we, as individuals and as an agricultural sector, understand about ourselves and our people, the more willing we will be to learn and adopt the new practices required to ensure we prosper in the face of any challenge. Increasing our self-awareness by reflecting on how our life experiences influence us helps to do that. It helps to build confidence and desire in a person to participate and contribute in leadership in an area where their skills are best used to provide the greatest benefit. Whether that is focusing at a practical on-farm level or at a sector wide level, we all has an important part to play.

Recommendations

My intention was to write this report in a language that connected with my target audience – farmers. It was intended to provoke and stimulate thought while it was being read and to break down barriers that may be present with regard to personal awareness and development.

- My recommendation to farmers and leaders is to take this paper as a catalyst for change. Use it to create your own lightbulb moment to ignite or expand your participation in leadership.
- It is an opportunity to make time to think, discuss and learn about yourself and those around you.

- If this report has connected with you in any way, make the time to try and understand why there has been a connection and what that connection means to you. Seek out solutions to any issues that may have arisen from that reflection and make a plan to deal with it.

As mentioned, most of my report is focused on farmers but my findings are just as relevant to our Industry organisations.

My recommendations to the agriculture sector are;

- That DairyNZ, Beef + Lamb NZ, Federated Farmers, Primary ITO, the Dairy Companies provide professional development to their extension specialists and farmer facing staff around the impact of self-awareness, self-reflection and personality styles on people
- That self-awareness and personality styles training be incorporated into existing extension and training programs
- When new models and programs are developed they incorporate a stronger connection to personality styles, self-awareness and learning styles.
- That future industry good marketing /engagement plans incorporate farmer driven demand models, rather than industry driven models to help achieve greater engagement with farmers
- Develop an incubator program led by leading farmers whose role is to identify and nurture future leaders.
- Industry good organisations encourage more research into the role of Mentors within the NZ Agriculture Industry
- That Industry good organisations facilitate, encourage and connect with farmers to train Mentors in a way that provides meaning.
- That Nuffield NZ Mentorship process for new scholars is reviewed.
- That all new Nuffield Scholars are made aware of the importance of Self-Awareness before undertaking a Nuffield study

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