



CREATIVE FUTURES

CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

Ronnie McCourt:

Creativity is about imagination, innovation's about a new way of thinking or a way of doing things. So the two things are bound together. The leader can set the scene. He sets the tone, he sets the climate from which the members can then react to that.

Karl Robinson:

You're constantly trying to find that creativity to push boundaries, because when you're playing so frequently, and most businesses judge in April, in the financial year, every Saturday we get judged at 3 o'clock.

Ronnie McCourt:

The Army's had to become a lot more flexible, adaptable and agile. The role has changed. The threat has changed. The world is much more complicated, unpredictable. The sort of enemy we are dealing with, they've got the technology that can match our own, and therefore we've got to really remember it's a battle of wits and so in our training of officers here at Sandhurst we're explicitly told of the seven questions that we have to ask ourselves when we're forming our plan second question is: What have we been told to do and why? And that also involves us then thinking about what the higher commander wants, not your boss, but your boss's boss wants. So that, if something goes wrong you can think about what initiatives must I take, what must I be able to achieve, if communications goes down, if the plan hasn't worked, and you've to therefore be thinking laterally, upwards and beyond the horizon. So creativity is a must.

Karl Robinson:

My job as a coach is to give them all the tools necessary to cope with the demands of being a professional footballer. Cope with the demands of trying to get a result in the football match. But I'm not the one that tells them what tool to pick. The best players pick the best tool more often than not. So they understand what the game plan is, they understand how I want them to play, and then that's left down to them to make the decisions. My job is to give them tools, which is the pass, the receiving and all the technical sides of the game - it's their job to pick the right one.

Sometimes the best answers to any question come from a group of people and it's my job to pick the right one to put into the team. So I'm very open-minded to any player of mine saying well gaffer, I don't think that's right. I'm struggling with this, this or this. So you're constantly

changing things all the time with your players. And I think what it is doing is, as a manager, the more and more I'm growing, the more and more I'm becoming open-minded and more aware of other people's strengths.

Ronnie McCourt:

Nobody's got a monopoly on wisdom, and therefore pooling people together, we find actually we'd have a slight twist on brainstorming, that we allow people to work on their own initially, before they get to the group, then the group pressures don't overcome that individual one good idea. What the British Army currently does is they have a system of what we call 'Red Teaming'. And Red Teaming is basically designed to interrogate the plan that's being offered to you. To interrogate the assumptions under which the plan is based.

Let's list all those things, that if these happen we will not get what we want. And then at the end of that, let's reverse everything. These are the things that we must do. If you like, what we're trying to do is go for, encourage divergent thinking before we get convergent thinking. There's a tendency, if we're trying to do things in a hurry, to converge on the solution too quickly. So what we try and do is get to open up more.

Karl Robinson:

What I have learned in the last three and a half years is step back, is sometimes much more powerful than stepping forward, because it gives you time to reflect. The answers don't need to be right away. They can be delayed. On the pitch, they have to be instant because that has an immediate impact. It's when, where, how.

Ronnie McCourt:

It's not all about barking orders in the Army any more. It's all contextual contingent on what it is you're trying to do. Sometimes you're going to have to be more directive because it's an emergency perhaps or because you haven't got time for consensus or even to consult. Other times you're going to, perhaps where the task is discretionary, when perhaps you're asking them to volunteer to do something, then you're gonna have to perhaps have a softer approach when it comes to these more dangerous situations where you're perhaps not quite sure what is happening, what we do is encourage officers and soldiers to step back, slow down, think through, not leap to conclusions. You are subject to all sorts of pressures that you may be aware of or not aware of, like biases, that will affect your judgement.