The background is a vibrant, abstract composition. At the center is a glowing, semi-transparent globe. Surrounding the globe are numerous colorful paint splashes and brushstrokes in shades of blue, red, yellow, green, and purple. The overall effect is dynamic and artistic.

the
field

THE SMALL

**Extraordinary
Handbook**

The Four Principles for Leading an
EXTRAORDINARY WORKPLACE

Part 1:
Extraordinary Leadership

We were going to name this book 'Forget Google' because there are so many businesses hailed around the world as the best organisations to work for. Amazing workspaces, perks, celebrations and bonuses. People are getting bold and funky with their organisational cultures. People are getting creative in how they do work and where they earn money.

But what if your workplace had the potential to be EXTRAORDINARY in its own, unique way, which looks nothing like Google, however is exceptional nonetheless?

What if you could lead small extraordinary things to create a movement for your organisation to be the best at the only thing it can be: Itself, driven by an exceptional group of people?

The Author

HELLO! My name is Kym Lincolne. My official title at The Field Organisational Leadership Development is: Director Extraordinaire – mainly because we don't take titles seriously but know that people need some context. I have the privilege of working with beautiful souls who sometimes get this whole Extraordinary way of life much better than me. I am inspired by them to be the best version of myself. I have worked with enough people in this space to confirm one thing: I love human beings, and believe, even when we are at our worst, that we are capable of Extraordinary things.

Thanks to the rebellious, angry, depressed, disheartened, defiant... Thank you for contributing to our extraordinary minds. To those who are drunk with love for life, positive beyond evidence, wanderers of the planet... Thank you for contributing to our extraordinary minds. To every human being on this big ball of rock and magma flying through space, thank you for reflecting back my extraordinary mind.

To our family and friends at The Field, thank you for setting the bar high so that we continuously step up to greater consciousness of ourselves and what we can create.

OUR MISSION IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO:

A world where workplaces are environments that advance human potential and happiness

Who is The Field?

The Field is an organisational development company with expertise in human cognition and behaviour through the fields of psychology and neuroscience. We have spent 15 years of working with literally thousands of leaders and teams, ranging from multinationals, charities, private companies and being a preferred supplier of leadership development in government organisations. Our reputation is that of incredible facilitation of culture and leadership development through a multilearning and experiential approach.

We believe human beings are wildly colourful, creative and wired for connection!

“We’ve had a great working relationship with Kym Lincolne from The Field in the leadership development space. As well as being an absolute dream to deal with, she always delivers. We have had high quality, high impact programs on a wide variety of topics and consistent great feedback from participants. What also stands out with Kym is her absolute commitment to what she does, her super engaging and passionate style and her unique ability to resonate and build relationships with a very diverse range of people. In our large, complex and diverse organisation this has been a critical factor to success. Our Learning and Organisational Development team couldn’t have asked for a better partnership”

THE LOWDOWN

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Extraordinary Leadership

INTRODUCTION

The Call to the Extraordinary

I imagine the people reading this and I hope that you come from a variety of backgrounds and interests. I hope you are a wild, extraordinary bunch. In writing this book, here is how I thought about you.

First and foremost, this book was written for those who are unconscious to their own greatness, which I am sure is most of us. Here is a quick true story...

My partner and I have a 41-foot yacht. This is a lovely boat that we have turned into a business, chartering people in Brisbane, Australia, to a beautiful island in Moreton Bay to a spot called Tangalooma. Idyllic sand and sea, ship wrecks and coral reefs. We love it and love taking people there. My partner also races the yacht. He trains people and takes them far north up the Queensland coast to do 'race weeks' – prestigious yacht races around Airlie beach and Hamilton Island. Because of the work that I do, I don't get a chance to join him on these race weeks however in 2015, I was able to help deliver (sail the boat back) to Brisbane. We had a husband and wife join us for the delivery down the coast too.

We had such a great time, as expected, travelling down the coast. The wildlife we saw, the coast line – all incredible. There was some fairly rough weather to contend with too, which led us to finding the most secluded anchorages in sheltered bays along the way down. One evening, having anchored up at a place called 'Pearl Bay', our friend was on the phone to his sister. Something sounded very, very wrong. When he hopped off the phone, looking a bit pale, he told us that his nephew had committed suicide, at the age of 17. I was speechless and had no idea what to say other than how sad I was for him and his family. It struck me how awful that was for such a young man to end his life so soon into it. We were quiet and thoughtful the rest of the day, and the following day continued our journey.

I had to fly out of Rockhampton to get back for work and my partner and our companions continued the delivery of the yacht to Brisbane. A day later when I got back home, my (at the time) 18-year-old daughter was sitting with me, chatting. We were talking about her work and her new relationship when she started talking about her ex-boyfriend of the year before.

“*She then paused and said, “Mum, I just wanted to let you know that his funeral is next week”. I immediately knew why. He had committed suicide. I burst uncontrollably into tears (and my eyes still well up with tears thinking about it).*”

She leapt up to console me. I sent a text message to my partner on the boat to let him know and it was then I realised, that my daughter's ex-boyfriend was the nephew of our friend on the boat. I had no idea. I had heard our friend's story about his nephew two days earlier without any idea of the connection.

If I think about it, I am writing this book for that young man, who reminded me how precious life is.

I also write this book for those of you who are becoming conscious, and know there is so much more to your unique life. I have a quote on my computer (and no idea who said it) that reads: “Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced”. So, for those of you who are waking up and want to live this life to the fullest, this book is also, of course, for you.

And I write this book for those of you who feel responsible for helping others be their best. Perhaps it is your role at work that calls you to this book. If you are anything like me, your heart and mind call you to bigger work while you are alive. This book is also, of course, for you.

Our lives are too short to be doing what we don't want to do each day, with people we don't want to do it with. It is time for us to experience work as something that advances our potential and makes us happy as human beings.

EXTRAORDINARY WORKPLACE

When you think about extraordinary workplaces, what companies do you think about? I think a lot of people would think about Google and Apple, maybe Zappos too. These workplaces look great and Zappos is famous for its alignment to its core values in creating an incredible workplace culture. In fact we hear a lot about Silicon Valley but sometimes having the greatest looking buildings and perks at work still don't get to the core of what brings out the extraordinary in people at work.

After working with thousands of leaders and teams, we started specialising in leadership. In fact, there is so much development happening for leaders it's crazy. However, here is the deal:

If people think it is actually about leadership development, they are missing the point.

It is about creating extraordinary workplaces, and leading extraordinary people. Leaders alone cannot create extraordinary workplaces. Everybody is needed to create an environment like that. and not only that, it cannot happen WITHOUT everyone.

Leadership development in isolation will create some nice short term changes, however the world of work is changing so quickly that the investment will be unrecognisable in months to come.

The world is ready for workplaces to be places human beings go where happiness is the goal, and if we think happiness is a fluffy subject, then we have not educated ourselves on the research. From Seligman to Achor, psychology researchers around the world are telling us that when we focus on happiness as a goal for work, it results in huge profits, sales, retention and productivity.

Currently, workplaces across the globe are filled with stressed out people who are lesser versions of themselves. People are trying to be the best for their families while their tanks are empty – drained from a work that creates more stress than joy. And there are others who can't wait until Friday and hate Monday mornings – seeing their work as just a necessary evil in order to relax in the evenings, have a few events to go to on the weekends and go to the same holiday destinations as everyone else around them annually.

How do we know? We have been working with organisations for some time and have had years of experience in observing such behaviours.

This is our gift to you because we have a mission:

To contribute to a world where workplaces are environments that advance human potential and happiness.

We hope you get something out of this. We want it to be practical, add value to you, and give you some small tools to apply. We hope that you get to advance your own potential and happiness through the work that you do. To us, that is part of a great life lived...

All that follows, is an overview of what we do when we work with organisations. It will give you a snapshot of our focus and the why beneath it all...

THE 4 FOCUSES FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY WORKPLACE CULTURE

When working with organisations on culture, it seems to work best when we do the work with them and THEN read the research, because research seems to only matter if it makes sense in the context of what we have seen and experienced. Over the last 15 years of being involved in this work, plus thousands of hours of reading, researching and evaluating, we have put together the 4 focuses which create an extraordinary workplace culture.

A forewarning: You will read the word 'Extraordinary' in this book many, many times for two reasons:

We want people to understand

'extra-ordinary' is just the small switch in our thinking and actions that make a massive difference –individually and collectively.

It's simply: That little bit extra.

We really want to separate out

what people think they already do or are familiar with, with what is actually extraordinary.

In a nutshell, the four focuses of an extraordinary workplace culture are:



**Extraordinary
Leadership**



**Extraordinary
Awareness**



**Extraordinary
Connection**



**Extraordinary
Thinking**

We will cover these briefly and help you find those small extraordinary things to make working life great for you and others...

Make sure you check out the end of this book – we have other free resources for you to help you create an Extraordinary Workplace!

EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP



If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

John Quincy Adams



A little exercise for you: Write down the details for the last time you...

Inspired someone to dream

Inspired someone to learn more

Inspired someone to do more

Inspired someone to become more

We probably don't realise the positive impact we are actually having on others and might also underestimate our ability to do that even more in helping other human beings. It's time, right?

Leadership needs a high road

Didn't the world get a shock when Donald Trump became the 45th president of the United States of America? The outrage! The protests. The denial. And the frustration that people didn't see it coming. From what I can gather (and seriously, I try to stay away from the news so this is an opinion gathered from a fraction of the data), Trump, despite all of the claims on his character as a human being and people thinking his running for president was a joke, seemed to speak the dream of many Americans: "Make America great again". Whether he will be successful at that remains to be seen, however, an interesting historical occurrence nonetheless. Almost four months on, people are still in uproar, with some big names boycotting specific policies so as not to show their support of his presidential decisions.

Never before in history have leaders been so publicly held to account for their behaviour. Given the access to information through the internet, more and more is being exposed of the actions of leaders that are not in the service of the people they are said to represent. People are becoming less and less tolerant of self serving motives in leaders.

In the workplace, this can turn into fragmented and dysfunctional cultures. Even as outsiders in the work we have done, people are quick to tell us the the damaging impact of poor leadership in their organisation, with an underlying expectation that there is less power and more responsibility in serving their people these days. Money and even task focussed leaders are quickly criticised for their lack of people skills. There is an expectation of a higher kind of leadership. Working with thousands of leaders over the years, we know the challenges that come with some kind of formal leadership. It can be a blimmin' tough gig!

Important note: We separate leadership out from management because to us they are different things. You manage things. You lead people. And to know the difference can be fairly significant. Working on getting a strategy designed, a budget approved, a document drawn up: Management. Working on influencing a mindset toward higher performance, encouraging people to work more effectively together, helping people become aware of the impact they are having on others: Leadership. The world needs both, however from our experience, a deep sense of personalised leadership is the part that is clearly missing.

Leadership needs a high road. A bigger purpose. Unless technical skills are paired with people skills (head and heart), leaders are not going to last in a world where there is so much change and so much choice for people to find something else. There is also a huge movement in the world for minimisation – living only with the minimum we need, given all of the greed and destruction of our planet that has preceded this day. People will be less swayed with money, and more swayed by working in a culture that is aligned with their values and needs.

What is the bigger purpose for you in influencing others?

“ *To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.* ”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Three levels of leadership

Confirmed and inspired by the work of Dave Logan¹ and Robert Keagan’s work with Lisa Laskow Lahey², we have observed three stages of leadership.

Socially safe leadership is when we do and say what we think others expect us to. Perception management is high in this leadership and personal growth is minimal. Self reflection generally takes form of working out where we were out of alignment with the majority, and the designing of strategies to come back into alignment. Likeability is a high motivator for leaders in this space.

Self motivated leadership is where what we are focussed on and interested in must correlate with the personal goals that we have for ourselves within our roles. Self-reflection is centred around how we influence toward this end, and also perception management to ensure that this motivation is not entirely visible to others.

Developmental leadership: In this space, we are aware of two different realms of reality in every conversation and action: The What and the Why. Developmental leaders understand the business reality of getting things done and moving the organisation toward profitability. However, they are simultaneously interested in the underlying psychological dynamics in themselves and in others to ensure continuous growth along the way. Chris Argyris³ (a well-known, awesome and fairly ruthless management specialist back in the 1970s) referred to this as “double loop learning” – not just looking at the behaviours but the attitudes beneath those behaviours. The developmental stage of leadership is where people realise that introspection is a critical work to be effective in their careers and to leave an emotional legacy that has brought out the best in the people they work with. Jim Collins⁴ in his book ‘Good to Great’ refers to a ‘Fifth Level’ of leadership’ where leaders are operating on behalf of something bigger than themselves. Not surprisingly, the most common attributes for this are humility and professional will. For those who are not leading at a strategic level in the organisation, the ‘something bigger’ is expanding the experience of self awareness, connection and thinking of the people working toward that bigger picture.

If you were really honest with yourself, where is your leadership right now and why?

Level of Leadership

Why?

It's time to let go...

Extraordinary leadership requires us giving 'stuff' up. I have watched myself wrestle at times in our business to not take credit for things. To not need to be acknowledged for ideas that may have originally been mine and worked out. I have at times in the past felt invisible for my efforts in the background, and hoping that someone would say: 'It's because of Kym that this was successful' or even better, 'It's because of Kym that I am this way'. Wow, the ego trip from that would be awesome. And very short lived. Even if those words came, the need to hear things like that doesn't go away.

If I could pass on one thing I have learnt in life, it would be, that the greatest work that I can do as a human being is this:

To let go of the small version of myself.

Kym Lincolne

Each of us has a small version of ourselves that might sound like the following:

- It is scared of being hurt
- It is scared of not being loved/liked
- It is scared we are not enough
- It is scared that we will fail
- It is scared of making mistakes
- It is scared of doing dumb stuff
- It feels a need to defend itself
- It feels a need to look good/successful/right
- It is scared of feeling vulnerable or out of control
- It is scared that there is nothing special about us
- It is scared that we will not have enough

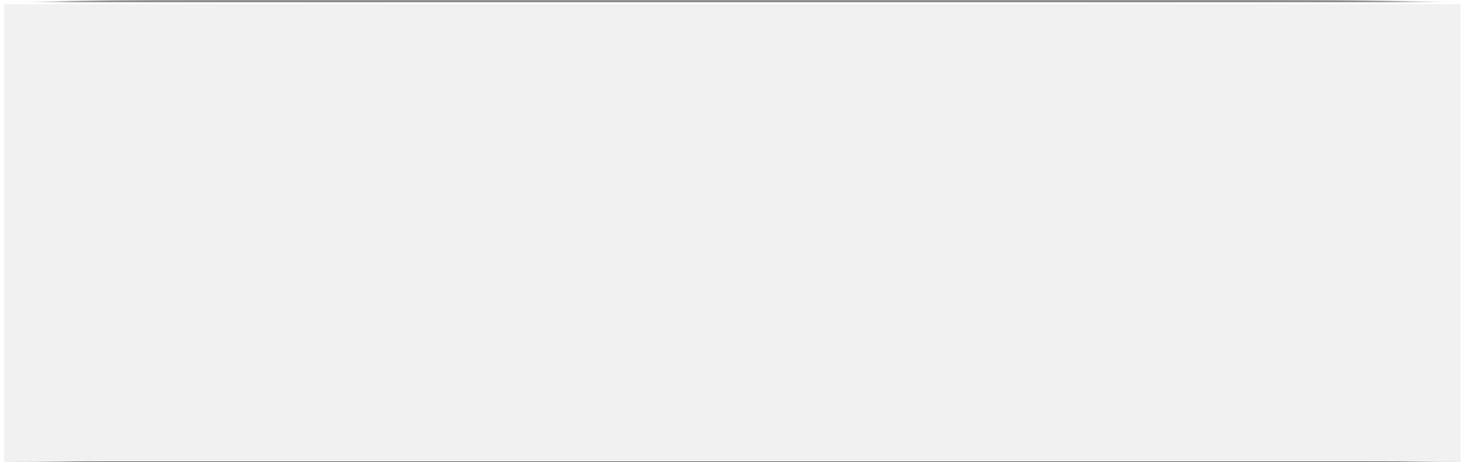
And the list goes on...

This is our 'ego' and we all have one. The easiest way to think of our ego is a protective version of you that is trying to keep you safe. It can also do this by trying to keep you small. This is NOT who you are. It is the remnants of a clever psychological process in our brain that stores memories (like when we felt we didn't belong on some level), creates beliefs around this and then adjusts our behaviour accordingly. Evolutionary wise, if we didn't fit in, we didn't survive so having people in our lives and feeling like we matter is a top priority to the brain.

Extraordinary leadership requires us to have the biggest and best version of ourselves step forward and be able to recognise this small version of us when it appears. We need to be able to acknowledge it for what it is trying to do for us, and then centre ourselves in who we know we are at our core. From this place, we will come from an adult position and act with the bigger picture in mind. Without it, we live limited, unconscious lives. There are a lot of children walking around in adult bodies. I have worked with leaders in their 60s and feel sad that no one ever came and helped them develop the wisest, calmest, most caring version of themselves through their work...

You know who you really are don't you? You know that you are a good and worthy human being? In your quiet moments, I am sure you know that you are giving life your absolute best, with the challenges you have internally and externally. You are doing your absolute best with the resources you have and when you realise how limiting and outgrown your small self is, you will feel a whole new level of personal excellence and freedom. This will have a massive impact on the people around you too.

A little activity for you and we would encourage you to really step in to this without the small version of you diluting it down... Describe your true character – the best version of you that has remained a constant throughout your whole life...



This version is the foundation of who you are which means as you step in to being an even better version of you in your career and influence on others, this is the platform for that work.

Self (but not ego) centric

A massive question that can be “earthshatteringlylifechanging” (yup, that’s a word):

“What is presenting itself in my life for me to learn from?”

After going through divorce, several strained friendships, bringing up my two children, and interesting work based relationships including leadership positions, here is one thing I noticed. When I asked myself the above question, something started to change in how I saw the world. It was as though I was centre stage in a wonderful show and everyone around me was the supporting act. This included the people that I loved and the ones I couldn’t stand. The ones I loved were reflecting back to me the loving qualities that I knew I had or wanted to develop. The ones I didn’t like were reflecting back to me the deeper work within me to let go of what I no longer needed.

If someone appeared to not respect me, I could conclude that they weren’t respectful people however (as much as that felt good) that didn’t make me feel better, nor did it help me with the next person that didn’t treat me with respect.

If I changed my perception as though they were trying to tell me something, then I could see that they were helping me develop the only respect that matters which is the respect I have for myself and others. If I disrespected them because of their behaviour, then all it was teaching me was that disrespect existed in me. They were not someone I had responsibility to. It was myself that needed the work. I wouldn't develop the wisdom without the trigger but could go into countless relationships doing the things that brought me a lack of respect.

One of my favourite Indian Mystic Gurus (ok, he is the only one that I really know the work of...) is Sadhguru. He is constantly speaking in front of hundreds of people and he stands up and asks:

“ *Where do you see me right now? Where? Oh, you are pointing at me standing here? Where? Where do you see me? No! You don't see me here! You see me in your own mind. This is where all reality is.* ”

The real work of leadership happens inside us and everything is pointing us toward a better version of who we currently are. When leaders get this, they grow from the challenges of their role. They see the people they have to deal with who are difficult as sculpting them for who they deeply want to become. I am not a religious person, however one of the best pieces of advice I have ever been given is when someone said to me: “God gives you nothing but angels Kym”, meaning that everyone is reflecting something back to me that can sculpt me into a better human being.

My question checklist for the people presenting themselves in my life right now:

- What are they doing that I love or dislike?
- What is my interpretation of what they are doing?
- If they are here to teach me something that I really want for myself, what is it?
- How will this make me better?

Who stands out for you right now as having an impact on your life in a way that you are conscious of today? What are your answers to these questions regarding the person/those people?

When we see the world around us as sculpting us, then the goal shifts from external pursuits to an internal pursuit: How much authority do I have over my character to be self authoring right now?

Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.

George Bernard Shaw

MORE TO COME...

Please subscribe below to be notified when the next chapter has been released.

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