‘Won’t get fooled again’: How personal values shape leadership purpose, behaviour and legacy.

Authors: Watton, Lichtenstein and Aitken

## Abstract

Whilst much has been documented about the construction of an individual’s personal values, very little attention has been paid to how personal values connect with core aspects of leadership such as purpose, behaviour and legacy. Through an expansion of Ken’s recent work on this topic, the authors explore the impact of personal values-led leadership. A model of how personal values shape leadership purpose, behaviour and legacy is introduced. These dimensions are then illuminated through interview data from senior managers from the financial services sector. The personal value impacts are examined in the context of the literature and implications for organisations and managers are drawn together.

KEYWORDS: Personal values; leadership legacy; values congruence; organisational culture.

## DEDICATION

## The central argument that runs through this paper was developed by Ken in the autumn of 2015 following a keynote speech he delivered at Lancaster University in October of the same year. During the symposium Ken focussed on the importance of creating a leadership legacy and the role personal values plays within this. It is therefore an immense privilege for us as the authors of this paper to articulate his argument more fully, it now being part of Ken’s own leadership legacy.

We have titled this paper ‘Won’t get fooled again’ in recognition of Ken’s love of The Who track first released in 1971. Ken routinely played this track during his lectures and focused on the line ‘Meet the new boss; same as the old boss’ from a leadership development perspective. Ken was encouraging students to both recognise this situation and also to be mindful of not getting fooled again, in particular to not ‘turn a blind eye’ to wrongdoing and to continually strive to ‘do the right thing’ both of these expressions were used by Ken frequently.

In this paper we seek to outline the relationship between personal values and leadership purpose, behaviour and legacy. We bring this relationship to life through a series of interviews with managers from the financial services industry utilising three core themes of ‘turning a blind eye’; ‘somewhere to hide’ and ‘no-where to hide’ with regards to ethical dilemmas and decision making.

Whilst much has been documented about the construction of an individual’s personal values set (e.g. Sosik, 2005), very little attention has been paid to the explanation of how personal values impact upon leadership purpose, behavioural actions and legacy from both a manager and follower perspective. It is the leadership perspective that we will explore in this article.

Parry’s 1998 seminal paper ‘Grounded Theory and Social Process: A New Direction for Leadership Research’ opened up the possibilities to understand the formal and informal connection (role) and interaction (process) that exists by leaders and followers, through a process of social influence. More recently Parry and Jackson (2016) called for a greater emphasis from managers to utilise social influence through responsible leadership. Crucially, for Parry and Jackson (2016) was the need for managers to consider through their actions, the impact they have upon the emotion (hearts) and sense-making (minds) of their followers. This leads to shared sense-making with followers, who they themselves are then enabled to take responsibility for their own actions. This further leads to the achievement of an organisation’s bottom line outcomes or leadership accountability as the output. It is argued that by taking a responsible leadership, long term view more than the bottom line outcomes will be produced, with community and societal outcomes being addressed over time (Parry 2015; Parry and Jackson 2016; Kempster, Maak and Parry, 2019). Parry highlighted the dilemma of a short term focus, which drives actions and behaviour purely towards bottom line outcomes at the detriment of emotion and sense-making (Parry, 2015). These described notions are represented in figure 1.

**Figure 1: Leadership responsibility and accountability**

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From the leadership components detailed in figure 1 we will first explore the personal values aspect of leadership. A manager’s personal values become vital in colouring the relationships, knowledge and communication interactions between themselves and their followers. Personal values reflect a silent power that impacts what we are drawn towards and driven away from, the choices people make and the people we trust. The case histories examined in this paper illustrate how personal values manifest themselves in our career choices and some of the ‘dis-ease’ caused by personal and organisational culture conflicts (McKenzie and Aitken, 2012). The extent to which an individual has their personal values activated, nourished and supported, perhaps gives insight as to how motivated they are to make significant contributions to the organisations they work for, or alternatively, may signal a change in organisations, to identify new opportunities where their needs and values are more closely aligned.

### **Research challenge**

There is a considerable extant literature about ‘values’ (Allport, 1961; Rokeach, 1979; Schwartz, 1994; Rohan, 2000; Hiltin & Piliavin, 2004). Much of this work is linked in with literature about leadership (Burns, 2003; Aitken, 2004; Sosik, 2005 and 2009a; Brown and Trevino, 2006; Byrne and Bradley, 2007; Illes and Reiter-Palmon, 2008; Chang and Lin, 2008). The challenge that we seek to address is that the particular type of values that has been neglected is the personal values of people in leadership positions. We are not so interested in organisational values (e.g. O’Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell, 1991) or corporate values (e.g. Klemm, Sanderson and Luffman, 1991) or some of the other adjectives that are popular precursors of the discussions about values. We are seeking to understand more about personal values, and the relationship between personal values and leadership. Our research question is therefore:

**How do personal values shape leadership outcomes and what then are the implications of this?**

Our suggested contributions with this article are two-fold. Firstly, we propose a model to help explore the notion of personal values in the context of other leadership components. Secondly, we explore the significant role personal values play in guiding leadership decisions in the workplace through a series of senior manager’s perspectives via a longitudinal research study.

The work of Lichtenstein, Aitken and Parry (2015) gave attention to the importance of understanding personal values in order to enrich our understanding of leadership. If we can identify linkages between different components and variables, we may be able to better predict, mitigate and reflect upon the likely outcomes and legacies of people having very different strongly held personal values (Aitken, 2004).

Let us next consider further what is meant by leadership being a process of social influence which affects someone else or something else (Parry, 1998). This process embraces both humanity and the natural world, within which humans are only one species amongst many. Adopting a systems wide global perspective, allows us to enumerate a wide variety of stimuli in our external environment which are known existential threats to our living system (even though the cause may be disputed). We suggest this consideration enables us to more clearly evaluate leadership through a personal values lens. Our intention is to move the debate from an abstract concept, to a science where personal or collective responsibility for specific outcomes is the locus of enquiry. Increasing our understanding of our own personal values provides us with the most powerful internal compass for navigating the opportunities, challenges and dilemmas in our world today.

Leadership orientation is influenced by psychological characteristics, cognitive biases (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1996), personality (Felfe and Schyns, 2010), and demographic characteristics such as the age, sex and social class (Thomas and Ramaswamy, 1996) of an individual. The literature acknowledges that personal values act as ‘perceptual screens’ (Hambrick and Brandon, 1988; England, 1967). An individual’s pluralistic outlook is ‘bounded’ by their personal values, which filters out information and focuses priorities. Hambrick and Brandon (1988) argue that personal values can act in two ways: (i) directly in terms of channelling behaviour; and (ii) indirectly in terms of perceptual screening. Lichtenstein, Aitken and Parry, (2015) proposed that in a managerial context, enacted leadership behaviour is shaped by a managers’ personal values, purpose and ultimately legacy. A managers’ personal values act as a perceptual filter for how he or she observes the external environment; we then select and funnel information; and thereby shape our purpose, behaviour, the common good and other leadership outcomes.

The role of personal values in leadership is yet to be fully understood. As Burns (2003) stated, “Leaders embrace values; values grip leaders”. Russel (2001:95) asserted, “Every enterprise is driven by its leaders’ individual and collective values, whether those values are understood or unconsciously influential, spoken or unspoken, written or unrecorded.” Adapted from England & Lee (1974), we see at least seven ways in which a manager’s often unconscious personal values have an impact upon sense-making and sense-giving. Personal values: (i) Influence managers’ perceptions of situations, (ii) Affect the solutions they generate, (iii) Impact the quantity and quality of interpersonal relationships, (iv) Influence perceptions of individual and organisational success, (v) Provide a basis for determining ethical behaviour, (vi) Affect the extent to which managers accept or reject particular organisational pressures and goals, (vii) Focus and shape managerial performance. Moreover, the extant literature (e.g. Russell, 2001) indicates the critical importance of a manager’s personal values sensitivity. This is an ability to tune into all interests, beliefs and motivational drivers present in important communication and interaction, starting with one’s own (McKenzie and Aitken, 2012).

Encouraging the audience to start with one’s own leadership, Ken (in his key note address, 2015) suggested the symposium delegates ask themselves a series of personal value guided questions:

* ‘Did I live a life which reflected and nourished my deeply held motivational drivers?’
* How long has it been since you reflected on your (personal) leadership values?
* How different are your practiced values from your aspirational values? Why and how? (Parry, 2015).

PERSONAL VALUES-LED LEADERSHIP

### Having explored the personal values dimension we would like to at this point examine three aspects of leadership outputs namely, purpose, behaviour and legacy. To help realise this we have adapted a version of the Upper Echelon Theory model (Hambrick and Mason, 1984 and Finkelstein and Hambrick, 1996) please see figure 2.

### **Figure 2: Personal values and Leadership Purpose, Behaviour and Legacy model**

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Hambrick and Mason’s Upper Echelon Theory proposed that an organisations effectiveness could be determined by the “reflections of the values and cognitive bases of powerful actors of the organization” (1984:193) with powerful actors being the senior management team. We have built upon the original model so that personal values-led leadership can be considered in a similar way.

**Leadership Purpose**

To date, there has been limited consideration of purpose both within organisations and the correlation that exists between leadership and purpose (Kempster, Jackson and Conroy, 2011). Further, Kempster et al. (2011) noted the significance for followers of an organisation achieving a balance between what they describe as internal and external goods. Internal goods are societal purposes, whilst external goods are monetary or similar employee benefits (corporate purposes). For followers internal goods are of paramount importance, why they are making a difference to society through the work that they do. Again, central to this argument is the idea of sense-making and the role leadership plays in creating this. As Pye observed sense-making is the essence of leadership (2005).

It is likely a manager’s purpose and behaviour will be influenced by his or her personal values. Whilst there are a variety of ways to understand the diverse purposes that managers have, Lichtenstein, Aitken and Parry (2015) explored the link between managers’ personal values and their varied leadership purposes. This study re-analysed the data from Aitken’s (2004) original work.

Surprisingly, the 2015 analysis did not reveal any conceptual congruence to Schwartz’s (1992) values model. Rather, six meta-value systems emerged from the senior team manager data that was explained by three higher-order types of purposes termed ‘*Self’, ‘Business’ and ‘Society’.* The conclusion was that a high percentage (54%) of respondents were pursuing a societal leadership purpose, this figure reflected the composition of the sample which was predominately made up of public sector senior team leaders. Our assertion is therefore that managers undertaking learning and development should be encouraged to more deeply reflect on their purpose as well as the personal values, which underpin them (Watton and Lichtenstein, 2017) in order to be able to create an increased level of sense-making, particularly around societal purposes with their followers.

### **Leadership Behaviour**

Leadership behaviour within organisations is a multifaceted, intricate ecosystem. Previous studies have found personal values are either motivators or inhibitors of ethical or unethical behaviour (Feldman, Chao, Farh and Bardi, 2015). Personal values are relevant for ethics and morality as they guide one’s identity and help shape one’s reference to others (Hitlin and Piliavin, 2004). Further, research highlights the significance of personal and organisational value congruence and the correlation this has with commitment, retention, work satisfaction, work attitudes, pro-social behaviour and work performance (e.g. McDonald & Gandz, 1991; Posner, Kouzes and Schmidt, 1985). There is frequently a tension between personal values and organisational expectations particularly when managers are faced with decisions or actions associated with moral dilemmas.
Hewlin (2009) highlighted that actual values congruence and apparent personal-organisational values congruence are neither the same thing nor permanent. She further described the phenomenon of an employee suppressing his/her personal values in conjunction with the pretence of expressing values that one does not hold as ‘Facades of Conformity’ (Hewlin, 2003; 2009). Employees are capable of masking their true personal values, e.g. meaning in life, and in falsely displaying values they perceive to be organisationally desirable. ‘Faking it’ won’t be an issue to someone who espouses ‘conformity’ values as they will strive to ‘fit in’ (Hewlin, 2009). The psychological distress caused by values incongruence and ‘faking it’, sometimes misidentified as ‘burnout’, should not be underestimated (Hewlin, 2003; Stormer and Devine, 2008).

In the literature, job status and/or influence relates to meaningfulnessthat has an impact upon affective or emotional commitment and job retention. Kahn’s (1990) studies have found that meaningfulness as well as psychological safety and psychologicalavailability are preconditions to engagement and by extension, retention.

### **Leadership Legacy**

A manager’s leadership legacy is usually only fully assessed once they have stepped down from their position. Brooks, Stark and Caverhill define leadership legacy as “the sum of the difference you make in people’s lives, directly and indirectly, formally and informally; it is the way you behave in your day-to-day life that defines your legacy” (2010:xi). An individual’s leadership legacy can be viewed as positive or negative (Shirey, 2014). More research is needed to understand leadership legacy as an outcome; critically, the relationship between personal values and leadership legacy is worthy of further investigation.

Leadership legacy is both projected and actual. Managers may want to project a legacy to those they wish to impress and want to influence. However, the actual legacy or imprint that is left behind, may be different from the projected. Similarly, a follower will undoubtedly have an impression of the same manager’s legacy, this may also be different! Reflecting upon this at an individual level may provoke some interesting questions. Is there a gap between the projected and actual legacy? Have we compromised? If so why?

During his keynote address Ken urged the audience to ask themselves

* What will be your leadership legacy?
* What will be your legacy when you move on?
* If you were to attend a job interview tomorrow, and you were asked what your leadership legacy will be when you leave this proposed position, what would you say? (Parry, 2015).

Whilst virtue and personal values are complementary, they offer different types of personal reflection (Parry, 2015). Personal values are the motivational states, whereas virtues are part of the legacy we leave behind, i.e. how we are remembered for the decisions we took and what we upheld.

Table 1 illustrates the deadly sins and heavenly virtues our actual leadership legacies could be assessed against (Parry, 2015).

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Ken highlighted that certain values, if pursued in an aberrational way, may lead to an individual being remembered for more sinful acts such as greed, envy, pride or slothfulness. In business, and the through the discourse typically taught in business schools, Parry and Jackson (2016) suggested managers may sometimes leave a legacy of sinfulness rather than one of virtue. This then links back to our earlier discussion when there is a behavioural focus on the bottom-line outcomes as opposed to leadership responsibility. Advocating critical discourse analysis, Parry (2014 and 2015) supported not just listening to what people say but to focus on the meaning behind the words used. These afford clues as to whether a person’s legacy is one of sin or virtue. We may have virtuous values, but if we solely focus on what we are accountable for, the words that we use, the decision’s that we take and how we implement them, may leave others to conclude we have left a legacy of sinfulness rather than one of virtue. By virtue we mean the extent to which our legacy to areas such as societal realms for the common good, community well-being, stewardship of the environment and economic infrastructure for future generations.

The research data in the study section illustrates the challenges managers often face in pursuing personal values-led leadership in the context of pressure for bottom-line outcomes and where ‘turning a blind eye’ is often normalized.

## THE STUDY

To explore and illuminate the notions of this paper in greater we will use data from a series of interviews with senior managers. The focus of the study was six semi structured interviews from a cross section of senior managers from a range of financial services industry backgrounds from around the world. The interviews were originally completed in 2012. Follow-up interviews were carried out to see what had happened between 2012 and 2016.

The respondents, male and female, were chosen to represent a range of roles across varying lengths of time spent working in the industry. Table 2 illustrates the demographics of the participants.

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The subjects had an average of 27 years’ experience in positions of formal authority and had high levels of job status including: CEO of a SME; Head of Business Development of a medium sized business and Vice President of a corporate.

The number of cases was selected as a purposive sample group as it addressed the requirement of a breadth of recognised industry classifications (super sector classification) including banks, insurance and financial services. The study aimed to provide a diversity of insight rather than to be representative.

## **Data Analysis**

Interviews were transcribed and interviewees reviewed the transcriptions for accuracy and for the contribution of additional ‘upon-reflection’ insights. Interview data were open-coded in accordance with Parry’s (1998) suggestion to use the grounded theory method to research leadership. A series of questions were formulated to capture both the respondents as managers themselves and also as followers in their organisations. A funnel approach was used with a combination of open and closed questions.

The interview responses were interpreted using a phenomenological analysis approach. Both Hycner’s (1985) guidelines for a step by step process of phenomenological analysis and Kempster’s (2006) description of this method were drawn upon comprehensively.

## **Results**

Organisation size ranged from small family businesses up to large multi-national organisations. There seemed to be an association between the increasing size of the organisation and the propensity of management to ‘turn a blind eye’ to ethical dilemmas.

When these managers were faced with ethical dilemmas three themes were identified through the open-coding process: to **‘turn a blind eye’** often knowing that there is **‘safety in numbers’** or doing the right thing as within their organisation there was **‘no-where to hide’**.

#### **Theme 1: ‘Turning a blind eye’**

Two interviewees, Chris and Alex confided about their inability to speak out or whistle blow to senior managers in their organisations about inappropriate or unethical behaviours that they had witnessed. Both indicated that their roles and job retention would have been in jeopardy if they had taken this course of action. Further, they explained that they would have found it difficult to find a similar role within the industry as a result of speaking out. Their psychological safety was challenged. Both Chris and Alex have since moved to new organisations.

The reluctance to whistle blow by Chris and Alex affords an insight into the leadership practice within their organisations.

Chris: ‘*Now, if you are going to speak about the standards, the policies, sticking to policies, procedures, doing things for the book you cannot survive … if it doesn’t harm the business they will do it, if it harms the business they cannot do it because they will be held responsible. In this part of the world they don’t even care about that … It’s a challenge with yourself, every day you challenge your own principles’*.

Research by Somers and Casel (2011) suggests that an employee makes a decision to whistle blow because they are faced with a situation that they find morally wrong and have expectations that a resolution will be found. Whistle blowing is more likely to take place in organisations where there is a democratic supportive structure. Conversely therefore, we suggest that if there is no democratic supportive structure, people will turn a blind eye and join in with the unethical practices that they see happening. In effect, they probably have no choice.

We considered risk-taking linked to ‘turning a blind eye’, as this had historically been one of the most dominant leadership practices occurring within the financial services industry. The idiom of ‘turning a blind eye’ resonated with some of the examples shared during the research. The phrase has been attributed to Lord Nelson who during the Battle of Copenhagen in 1801 chose to ignore the order of his superior officer by putting his telescope to his blind eye to ‘observe’ the signal of flags and therefore claiming not to have received the command. It is a concept that is now used frequently in our everyday language. Often, we have opportunities to turn a blind eye to moral dilemmas. An understanding of the notion of the blind eye allows an examination of how people in leadership positions can reflect upon their personal values and thus be sinful or virtuous with their leadership work through the lens of personal values and ‘turning a blind eye’.

#### **Theme 2: ‘Safety in numbers’**

Three of the interviewees worked in multi-national organisations that employed more than 10,000 staff. There were several examples of managers relying on there being ‘safety in numbers’ with regards to the behaviours that occurred. Pat gave an example of the industry coming out on top irrespective of what was happening to the economy. Pat spoke of the ‘blood sucking’ ruthlessness of the industry wherein they still made money but still did not have to be ethical:

Pat: ‘*But to be honest with you working for a company the size of [name of organisation] and in the industry, it doesn’t really matter whether the economy is good or bad … it sounds a bit blood sucking but whichever way the economy is going we tend to do o.k. through it. One economy we sell that product and in the other economy we sell that product.’*

When the follow up interview was carried out Pat had changed organisations and now works for an independent financial broker, an SME-sized business. One of the reasons Pat left was the size and ‘corporate-ness’ of his previous organisation.

One of the interviewees, Mel, was a head of a department in a medium-sized business when the first interviews were carried out. S/he spoke of not compromising personal values and being prepared to leave an organisation if asked to do something s/he did not think was ethical.

Mel: ‘*If I were asked to do anything at a personal level that made me uncomfortable in terms of conforming, I would either not do it or otherwise I would leave*’.

Mel has since left this organisation and has set up a not for profit community based organisation. One of the reasons Mel left was because s/he didn’t want to remain in the industry anymore and wanted to make a positive contribution and give something back.

#### **Theme 3: ‘No-where to hide’**

The two interviewees who were in organisations with the smallest number of staff both had several examples of the organisational culture being one of ‘no-where to hide’. One of the respondents spoke about controlling risk in the family business that s/he is the owner/director of:

Lesley: *Yeah, it’s down to me basically ... Risks for financial services business is the advice you are providing and if you are not providing it correctly you’ve got inherent risk problems within the business. So we try to minimise risk as much as we possibly can. That’s the worry going forward alright you have got your professional indemnity insurance which will take care of any claims but that’s not really the point. You don’t want to be faced with those situations arising*’.

Four years later we approached all of the interviewees for a second interview, three were conducted and the role and organisational outcomes have been established for all of the interviewees. The participants were asked to capture their personal values and to find out what responses and actions they had taken since 2012. Again the interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed as described above.

Schwartz’s (1992) SVS 57-item questionnaire was adapted for ease of understanding by respondents who were asked to allocate out of 100% the number that represented the strength of the espousal of their personal values to pre-classified groupings of single values. All of their top values priority corresponded to Schwartz’s value system of ‘self-direction’ that includes the top three values of: meaning in life, choosing own goals and self-respect. To help understand these aspects we highlight below the ‘no-where to hide’ theme for their responses.

**Second round of interviews: Theme 3: ‘No-where to hide’**

Sam had remained in post as the CEO of an Investment Bank in Vietnam with less than 100 employees. Sam’s organisational culture is one of ‘no-where to hide’. Sam spoke about the change in perception from the boards initial expectation of an accountability focus driven by short term results compared to his/her long term approach centred on responsible leadership:

Sam*: ‘The norm in the industry is for people to drive their organisations to very high growth … I see a lot of cases like that. But for me personally, I don’t want to be like them and I don’t want the staff under me to be under that much pressure … At first the board did not like my approach, they wanted immediate results and big profits but now 8 years on, they support me and my strategy. We have had steady growth year on year. Not many of the other CEO’s in the industry can say the same thing, many have left and some of the organisations have been taken over’.*

Mel spoke about his/her decision to leave his/her senior position within a medium sized business and establishing a not for profit venture which h/she considers more fulfilling:

Mel: *‘[Name of company] is good for my soul … I turned my back on a stellar career and I decided I don’t want this anymore. There were many reasons why, including searching for self-fulfilment and giving something back but, I also disliked a lot of what I saw in the industry: a lack of honesty, a lack of integrity, a lack of transparency. I was asking myself “Is this what life is all about?” “Is this what I should be doing?” and I didn’t want to do that’.*

Similarly, Pat spoke about his/her rationale for leaving a large corporate organisation and joining a SME sized business with a greater emphasis on fulfilment:

Pat: *‘I was at the [name of organisation] for 3 years. They are very much corporate America, which I don’t particularly like … Organisations like [name of company] often don’t do what is best for the client, it is based on what gave the biggest fee. So I am now working for an independent, there are 35 of us in the company. Being an independent means we are not affiliated with anybody. We can say hand on heart we’ve looked at all the different companies and this is the best one for you, in your situation’.*

## DISCUSSION

The results from the interviews illustrate the complexity of the values dynamic between industry and organisational cultures and the participants’ personal values. When managers feel there are inconsistencies between their personal values and the organisational values there is a risk of staff choosing to seek roles elsewhere. Four out of the six managers had new roles in smaller organisations in the intervening four year period. The two that remained were already in small to medium sized enterprises. Ethical dilemmas appear to exacerbate subjective perceptions of person-organisation fit. Pat’s discussion of ‘blood sucking ruthlessness’ illustrates this values clash. We suggest that if people find an incompatibility between their personal values and the leadership culture of the organisation, they are likely to leave and move to an organisation where that incompatibility does not exist. Indeed, it seems from our study that in smaller organisations, there is a higher propensity of a ‘no-where to hide’ culture when it comes to personal and organisational values.

This research illustrates that those with high status jobs have more control over their work experience and a sense of meaningfulness. The respondents’ personal values priority of meaning in lifebears this out. If those with high job status do not feel they are getting meaning out of their work life (internal goods from a purpose prospective) this key motivational value will not be satisfied which impacts upon their engagement at work. This may lead to challenges from a retention of staff perspective.

Regarding psychological safety, Kahn (1990) found that if employees can’t be open due to fear of negative consequences to image, status and/or career, personal engagement becomes too risky. Ethical dilemmas create unclear and unpredictable situations where participants may have felt unsafe to formally raise concerns. Chris and Alex’s cases of ‘turning a blind eye’ where speaking out would threaten their psychological safety with dismal is a clear illustration of this.

The extracts from the interviews further expose the organisational discourse that the interviewees perceived either in the industry or from their original organisations from a leadership legacy perspective. For Pat and Mel their previous organisations had a sinful legacy with statements such as ‘*a lack of honesty, a lack of integrity, a lack of transparency’.* For Sam the industry norm has a sinful legacy ‘the norm in the industry is for people ‘*to drive their organisations to very high growth’.* In comparison to the interviewees new roles in the case of Pat and Mel where the situation is now more virtuous and in particular for Mel who has positively chosen to ‘give something back’ to his/her local community thereby creating a more virtuous and impactful legacy.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANISATIONS AND MANAGERS

For organisations and managers there are a number of implications. From an organisations perspective, previous studies have found self-enhancement/approval values to be the strongest motivators of unethicality (Feldman, et *al*., 2015). This is the prevalent values-based discourse in the financial services industry and therefore people with this values orientation as their dominant personal value are heavily overrepresented. There is nothing inherently wrong with self-approval values: we all have them and get them fulfilled in a variety of ways. However, when people in a change role have self-approval as their dominant value, without a diversity of other values to act as checks and balances, there is a higher risk those values will be fulfilled in disempowering and harmful ways.

Managers that can cultivate sensitivity to their personal values and those around them will be more adaptable in their communication and relationships when faced with ethical dilemmas. Developing skills such as emotional intelligence and critical reflection will improve the chances of noticing ethical challenges and be better prepared to not only initiate dialogue around it, but avoid becoming complicit with unethical behaviour (Carsten and Uhl-Bien, 2013).

By creating a leadership culture of participatory leadership through diversity will create psychological safety for employees to engage and confront ethical dilemmas rather than embark on a facade of conformity or in ‘turning a blind eye’. Creating a leadership culture where ‘turning a blind eye’ is challenged and there is ‘no-where to hide’ when it comes to ethical choices would send a key message to followers and guide employees to make better decisions when faced with ethical dilemmas. Gentile (2017) has highlighted the role management education has to play in business ethics through her work on ‘Giving Voice to Values’. This approach enables individuals through a process of re-framing to instinctively know what the right thing to do is and to actively challenge unethical behaviour.

## Conclusion

We started this paper with our research question: **How do personal values shape leadership outcomes and what then are the implications of this?** We hopeexploration of the personal values-led leadership model, together with examples of this in practice, we have illustrated the importance of a leader’s purpose, behaviour and legacy. These areas are hugely significant from not only an individual managers perspective but from an organisational culture perspective. By managers aligning their personal and organisational values more closely and prioritizing an emphasis on follower emotions and sense-making, followers will feel more connected and committed to an organisations aims and objectives, particularly when purposes are for the greater good. This will then create a sustainable achievement of bottom-line outcomes.

We acknowledge that this is a small scale study and therefore the findings are not generalizable. Further interviews and interviews outside of the financial services sector would be beneficial as a future opportunity. Additional research into the impact between personal values and leadership variables by Ken’s dedicated followers would deepen our understanding of this important dynamic.

This article is drawn from Ken’s leadership legacy. He forged our collaboration, guided our focus and stretched our scholarship to reach for the ‘so here’s the thing’. In particular, he encouraged us to build on Paul’s pioneering leadership values work and go beyond the extant literature that treats personal values as an independent variable in a model amongst a variety of other variables. Instead, Ken’s vision was to voice personal values-led leadership and deepen our understanding to perceive personal values as a perceptual lens in relationship to other related leadership components including purpose, behaviour and legacy as illustrated in the model we have introduced. Moreover, Ken’s keynote speech ignited Emma to both re-analyse her original data and collect additional data through a personal values-led leadership lens. This produced a descriptive vein of longitudinal data we have used to expose the personal values-workplace dynamic in relation to the decisions managers take.

Reflecting on aspects of the personal values-led leadership dynamic and from hearing industry insights from the interviewees who have chosen to not get fooled again, we can return to The Who track to conclude:

*“I'll tip my hat to the new constitution*
*Take a bow for the new revolution
Smile and grin at the change all around
Pick up my guitar and play
Just like yesterday
Then I'll get on my knees and pray
We don't get fooled again” (Townsend, 1971).*

As great as Ken’s leadership legacy is to us, it is ‘academic’ compared to his legacy as a partner, friend, colleague, mentor, coach - and a whole lot more - that touched not only the three of us but so many of us around the world.

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Figures and tables:

Figure 1: Leadership responsibility and accountability

Figure 2: Personal values and Leadership Purpose, Behaviour and Legacy model



Table 1: Personal sins and virtues

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Seven Deadly Sins** | **Seven Heavenly Virtues** | **Universal Virtues and Character** |
| Sloth | **Theological Virtues**Faith – belief, trust, loyalty, conviction | Humanity – interpersonal strengths viz tending and befriending (love, kindness, social intelligence) |
| Gluttony | Hope – desire, belief, reliance, expectation | Justice – civic strengths for healthy community (teamwork, fairness, leadership) |
| Anger (a.k.a. wrath) | Charity – generosity, helpfulness, benevolence, mercy | Transcendence – connections to larger universe (gratitude, hope, spirituality, appreciation of beauty) |
| Pride (a.k.a. vanity) | **Cardinal Virtues**Prudence – wisdom, vigilance, thoughtfulness, discretion | Wisdom – cognitive strengths re knowledge (creativity, curiosity, judgement, perspective) |
| Greed (a.k.a. avarice, covetousness) | Justice – fairness, equity, rightness, dispassion | Courage - will to accomplish in face of opposition (bravery, perseverance, honesty) |
| Lust (a.k.a. desire) | Fortitude – strength, courage, resoluteness, endurance | Temperance - protect against excess (forgiveness, humility, prudence, self-regulation) |
| Envy (a.k.a. jealousy) | Temperance – moderation, restraint, self-mastery, frugality |  |

(Source: Parry, 2014)

Table 2: Participants background data

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Code | SI01 | SI02 | SI03 | SI04 | SI05 | SI06 |
| Anonymised name | Lesley | Mel | Sam | Pat | Chris | Alex |
| Location | UK | USA | Vietnam | USA | Bahrain | UK |
| Industry classification | Fin Services | Equity Investment | Investment | Insurance | Banking | Banking |
| Number of employees  | <10 | >250 | <100 | 10,000+ | 10,000+ | 10,000+ |
| Global | N | Y | N | Y | Y | Y |
| Years of experience | 37 | 13 | 23 | 41 | 21 | 28 |
| Role | Owner/Director | Head of Bus Development | CEO | Financial Planner | Vice President | Deputy Head of Commercial Lending |