

What is Systemic Leadership, and why you should consider it



Sending leaders on a course will build knowledge, but it will not build skill. The practice of leadership has been around for 40 years, and it stands to reason that there are better ways to build business leaders of distinction. We all know that leadership makes a difference and yet businesses are still sending leaders on courses and not seeing or feeling an impact.

Sending leaders on courses must feel like buying a prized piece of art and hanging it inside someone else's home. What if your leaders were shaped to suit your 'home', in the colours and hue that you like, in the shapes that fit your room?

To capture value from your leadership investment, you need to build leaders in real-time by leading through real-life challenges within the current business context and delivering the promised business results. It's a mindset shift from academic, theoretical leadership toward on-the-job executive development, aka 'systemic leadership'. It differs from programmatic leadership (courses, programs, online learning) because it is underpinned by the pressure to deliver leadership results.

Lockstep's systemic leadership development will ask more of you, but will deliver in spades. It requires you to deeply understand the success formula that underpins your business, to bravely acknowledge where it falls short, and patiently follow a non-linear path. It will challenge your leaders to work with what is in front of them. This is where your masterpiece takes shape as tough problems are solved, blockages released, and breakthroughs made.

Systemic leadership requires a whole-business focus that connects the strategy, the CEO, and the leader body with one another. All elements need each other to realise their full impact, and systemic leadership enables this with:

- The quality of the business strategy that steers the CEO and the leader body,

- The ability of the CEO to form an exco and start the work,
- The exco's implementation of the CEO's vision,

There can be no gaps in this approach. When all aspects of executive delivery are addressed methodically over time, the entire business begins to improve. Teams make better decisions, notice the blind spots, cultivate more efficient working relationships, and settle debates with less conflict.

Systemic leadership is about incremental progress from position A to a better position B. The prospect of a better future is the competitive life blood of a highly effective leadership solution. Responsible leaders warm to the challenge, knowing that the effort will pay off with good results.

If systemic leadership appears dry and overly gritty, it is not. In fact, the 'close quarters' nature of Lockstep's systemic leadership system provides more humanity, human connection, vulnerability, and care than any off-site program could offer. And the wins are usually felt more keenly, too.

Paint your own leadership masterpieces, hang them on your own walls, and soak in their ever-evolving beauty.

Use systemic leadership to develop your leaders in your own way, according to your own business needs, in line with your own timeline. Their performance will speak for itself.