

# Innovation, leadership and emotional intelligence

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talks with Dr Martyn Newman

# SKY: Core business

The core purpose of SKY is to perpetually renew. Personally renew, rather than just change.

Sky is a business that doesn't really own very much – it hasn't got a big mine or a big patent – it's really a business that's built around people and ideas.

# A BUSINESS THAT'S BUILT AROUND PEOPLE AND IDEAS

The idea of renewing the business for the future, leads us to innovation.

How do we innovate across the full suite of our products and our content?

How do we do new things that allow customers to feel that we're relevant for their future lives?

# “HOW DO WE ALLOW CUSTOMERS TO FEEL THAT WE’RE RELEVANT FOR THEIR FUTURE LIVES?”

- The questions that we face isn’t **going** to be found in a spreadsheet. You need to understand people’s attitudes as well as their behaviours.
- Through attitudes, we can start to think about where they will go. Behaviours tend to tell us about what they do today.

*Innovation is driven by the sense of renewal. Constantly making sure that the business stays relevant for the future.*

# “Believe in Better”

This allows anybody in our organisation, wherever they are, to say, “This can be better. This isn’t good enough and we need to improve it.”

Once you’ve established that direction you have to follow it through, to have the confidence and a bit of courage to put that right at the centre of the organization. Not just at the top of the organisation, but throughout the organisation.

And from that, innovation then flourishes, successes are important because it says to us, if we can do it here then we can do it somewhere else.

# A mind-set of improvement

We identify where things are not working and have the culture that allows us to act quickly over those things and improve them. *But always with an overarching mindset of improvement and betterment rather than failure or blame.*

Our belief is one of perpetually trying to improve, you'll find that will start to flow broadly through the organisation. But it's not always comfortable. As I say, when people come back and say, "this isn't good enough", it requires you to address it.

# Leadership and creative innovation

- I think one of the challenges, is people often think about innovation in relation to product initiatives – they'll link creativity to content. There are only two manifestations of creativity, mental and physical. Innovation and creativity are all about the application of ideas.
- Some of the most valuable ideas exist in smaller parts of our business and we've brought it back to the bigger part of the business. That's really where you get the benefit of leverage.

# EI: the bedrock of our work

The core skills of optimism and empathy, and the ability to listen hard, are things that have really flowed from the work we've done on emotional intelligence and mindfulness and these are really important skill sets.

The quality of conversations, the listening skills, the ability for people to seek first to understand and put themselves in that colleague's shoes, rather than jump to what's immediate from where they sit. It's just getting better and better.

# Performance and success

Performance and success is not just one year or one quarter, it's every year and every quarter. We don't want to say we've achieved success, we want to repeat success and that requires us to really move, if you like, the performance curve to a different place.

At Sky now, is that I see a set of leaders who increasingly set their own standards. I don't need to set their standards for them anymore. They're constantly redefining those standards.