

# Leading through Values Book Launch

SPEECH BY PAUL CHIPPENDALE | 17 FEBRUARY 2006

I have always been fascinated with how seemingly simple ideas or concepts can spread around the world, like a virus, with significant impact – often very negative. Take the recent cartoon images in the newspapers in Denmark for example.

Sometimes, as the Values AT Work team have explained in their book, *Leading through Values*, the impact of a simple idea can last for two and a half thousand years as is the case with Plato's 'truth virus.' The 'truth virus' was the idea that everything could, and wherever possible, should be reduced to black or white, true or false: and from this approach would emerge objective reality – absolute truth!

Not all ideas that spread like a virus have negative impacts. Take Rutherford, the famous New Zealand scientist. He moved to the Cavendish Laboratory in England where he was part of the team who first split the atom. I recall Reg Revans, who was one of that team, telling me that the most important thing he ever learnt from Rutherford was Rutherford's insistence that it was more important to, as he would say, lay your 'ignorance on the table' than to share what you do know. To only share what you know is to be on an ego trip, new learnings can only come when we share what we do not yet know, so we can work together to find the answers.

Reg Revans took Rutherford's idea of the importance of 'sharing one's ignorance' on board, and developed Action Learning. At the time the Belgian economy was in a real mess – the Belgian government had heard about the great results Revans was achieving through action learning and asked him for help, their whole economy was turned around. Revan's action learning model turned into the quality movement which now benefits organisations everywhere on the planet! All this from Rutherford's simple idea of the importance of 'sharing one's ignorance.'

Ten years ago another New Zealand entity, the Values AT Work team, came up with a seemingly simple idea: 'Find and Follow your True North.' Thousands of people have now done this and the benefits are well documented. Now in the latest *Time Magazine* (February 13, 2006) performance psychologists too have now discovered and documented the incredible value of the True North Process and have several pages extolling its incredible life-enhancing power.

Just like Values AT Work's 'True North process,' which has now proven to be ten years ahead of its time, I believe the simple ideas and techniques presented in their latest book *Leading through Values*, are again powerful and ten years ahead of their time! Organisations who embrace the book will be way ahead of the rest. Congratulations Shar, Michael and Dougal.



Paul Chippendale is the developer of the AVI, a Fellow of International Management Centres, and head of their Values and Ethics papers for MBA programmes. He is Founder and Director of the Minessence Foundation, a leading-edge values think tank research and design centre based in Brisbane, Australia. Paul is regarded as one of the world's leading experts in the field of values theory research and development.

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