



## **The Leadership Shift – Stepping back to reflect**

At the heart of being a great leader, we believe, is acting with authenticity in all its shapes and forms. But what happens when you leave the corporate world and are no longer a leader in the same way?

We asked Corinne Jeffery, one of our amazing leadership coaches at Synergy for Growth, about her reflections on leaving the corporate world behind after 36 years of working in big organisations, to begin the next phase of her life, to experiment with her boundaries, with who she is and her to continue to develop and grow.

### **Over to Corinne 😊**

After having the summer to bask in my new found freedom – both personally, professionally and in time – no more alarm clocks! – and as we move into the autumn I have been reflecting on my adventure so far and I share them in the hope that it may stimulate your own thoughts.

**The challenge of letting go** - One clear pattern has emerged for me: shedding the ingrained expectations of constant productivity has not been easy. For much of my life, achievement and output were paramount, from school exams and university assignments to the relentless drive for results at work. These expectations are reinforced not only by myself - prompting guilt when I pause to simply read - but also by others, through questions from friends and family like, "What did you do today?" or "What have you got on?"

This experience has led me to reflect on the true source of this perpetual activity. How much of my "busyness" stems from personal high-performance

drivers, and how much is shaped by the structures around me, whether in traditional employment or self-employment? There's no denying that staying busy—setting tasks, activities, goals, and milestones - can be motivating and provide a sense of value and purpose. Yet, when these structures fall away, what remains? In my case, I found myself recreating those frameworks with detailed plans and goals, raising the question of whether this is a lingering habit from my professional life or a core aspect of my identity.

Five months into this journey, I am gradually discovering the courage to resist the compulsion to always "do" and allow myself the space to simply "be." This ongoing practice highlights how easily we fill our lives with obligations and schedules, sometimes at the expense of opportunities for change, growth, and wellbeing. The urge to fill my time with activities and tasks still remains strong, and this is accompanied by a sense of lingering guilt if nothing is accomplished. In many ways, busyness can be as addictive as any other pursuit, and I am mindful of not letting it become my sole driver, determined not to lose sight of my value beyond constant activity.

How can organisations learn from this personal transition? Are we, as individuals and teams, so consumed by busyness that we leave no room for deep reflection, stillness, or genuine awareness - of both our surroundings and ourselves? There is immense, often underrated, power in creating this kind of space. The most significant personal and organisational growth can often emerge from these periods of reflection, presence, and quiet.

As I reflect on my transition out of the corporate environment, another significant realisation emerges: Once upon a time I was a leader! I had a formal title, clear authority, and the mandate to drive strategic change. Now, outside those structures, I am asking what it means to be a leader and where my sense of authority resides.

Within the corporate world, I prided myself on my willingness to challenge hierarchy and job titles, speaking my truth and ensuring my voice was heard. Yet, I now recognize that much of my personal authority was deeply rooted in the validation those job titles provided - who knew it! This new awareness has made me question the authenticity I believed I embodied - was my confidence truly my own, or was it inextricably linked to my professional status?

How much power and authority do you unconsciously take from your role? How might this reliance on titles and positions skew your authenticity or constrain you? For me, it was only after stepping away from a formal title that I began to see just how much it had served as a "work mask," shaping not only how I was seen and experienced but also how I saw myself.

Now, as I redefine my sense of authority, I am noticing a shift towards greater collaboration and less of a need to dominate discussions or lead conversations. The process of creating my authority again is allowing me to embrace a different, perhaps more authentic, approach - one that does not depend on titles but on genuine engagement and curiosity in and with others.

*We are excited that Corinne has chosen to continue her growth as a leader, leadership coach and team coach with us at Synergy for Growth in support of our mission to help leaders lead with greater levels of true authenticity 😊*

If you want help, or simply to know more, get in touch with us today or sign up for one of our free sessions in September.

Join us for **Embracing The Leadership Shift - harnessing the power of the team** – an interactive online one hour session for leaders who want to lead with authenticity, true connection and create greater synergy across their teams.

Join us to connect with leaders from outside of your current network, share and discuss current challenges and discover helpful ways to truly harness the power of your team whilst leading authentically.

Choose from a number of dates in September and join us, it's easy just click here:

<https://synergyforgrowth.co.uk/embracing-the-leadership-shift/>

As always, we would love to hear your views.

Please message me directly at [caroline@synergyforgrowth.co.uk](mailto:caroline@synergyforgrowth.co.uk) or complete our contact form and we will get right back to you:

<https://synergyforgrowth.co.uk/contact-us/>