

## **A Leadership Code for Dosh**

I was recently inspired to put together a 'Leadership Code' for [www.dosh.org](http://www.dosh.org) - who support adults with a learning disability to have more independence and control over their money.

All of our team members are involved in communications and connections with: colleagues, stakeholders, commissioners, families and the people we support, and I consider each one of them to be a **Leader**.

My colleagues have been recruited for their values, beliefs and competencies and their desire to make a difference to the life of a person with a learning disability. We are a democratic company, and each member has an opportunity to make an input, contribution and change to the way we support people and the way our company is directed.

We have a strong leadership theme and culture in our company, which makes being part of it special. We published our 'Leadership Way' in 2014:

<https://leadershipintheraw.org/2014/09/25/leadership-the-dosh-way/> Five years later we are publishing our Leadership Code. A set of 10 leadership behaviours which form our principles and rules:

### **Thera's Values are Our Values:**

- Thera will show that people with a learning disability can be leaders in society;
- Thera will be controlled by people with a learning disability;
- People supported by Thera can say how their Thera company is directed and managed;
- People with a learning disability will design the support they want from Thera;
- Thera will respect the rights and wishes of people at work, at home and in the community;
- People with a learning disability will check the quality of support from their Thera company;
- Thera Group will be led by a charity.

### **Leadership Code (of Behaviours)**

#### **1. Lead by Example - Role Model – Setting Standards:**

When you are in a position of responsibility you are a role model and your example will always have an impact, so it is important to choose well and be consistent. We believe there are no days off from being a role model:

- We live by the values and standards of our parent organisation: Thera [www.thera.co.uk](http://www.thera.co.uk)
- We prioritise other people's needs before our own
- We speak up for people we support on their behalf when they can not
- We have our own code of conduct and values
- We recognise when we are in a position of responsibility - our example will always have an impact
- We have a strong work commitment and ethic. It is always about doing the very best for others

## **2. Empowering:**

Each team member in Dosh has a unique talent. We start to explore this when we look for new team members through our recruitment and selection process, and then make sure their particular talent is used to the full to make the people we support and our company successful.

We provide our team members with the means, opportunity and authority to effect change both for the people they support and our organisation.

We operate a 'no blame culture'. We all make honest mistakes and we encourage our team members to learn from them, which enables our colleagues to do their job without feeling constrained.

## **3. Visionary:**

It is about where you want to be. We write a compelling 'Vision Statement' that sets out our vision. Make your vision so big and exciting that it captures everyone's imagination

Your vision is not about you! Your vision needs to make a difference in other people's lives.

We share our vision with others so that they can make it their vision too, as we know will not succeed unless those around feel they have a stake in our future.

We never take our eyes off our vision – we have relentless focus on where we want to be.

## **4. Character:**

Doing what is right over what is easy and staying true to our values. There are often occasions when you will be up against it and the situation can feel insurmountable. It is always at this point that you find the energy and determination to persevere in order to achieve the best outcome.

You are honest about your failures and successes and learn from them.

## **5. Compassion:**

All team members think beyond themselves when they consider their work and how they will support people and their colleagues.

Our team members write stories for our Board of Directors (which are shared on our website) about how they have made a difference in another person's life through their work, which demonstrates their commitment.

## **6. Clarity:**

Leaders are clear about what their team and organisation's mission and vision is and they can articulate this in an accessible way.

Leaders are clear about the benefits of their support to people with a learning disability

We are clear about what our mission is: "to support people to be more independent and have more control over their money" and we share our 'Dosh Promise':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0vAJbvcnvug> a set of standards by people with learning a learning disability

People know what is included in our service, which is detailed in both our Information Guide and website. All our documentation is written in an accessible format. We are clear about the benefits of our support and service to people with a learning disability.

#### 7. **Consistency:**

People need to know where they stand with you, not just today but every day.

Working in this way ensures we consistently support people across the country to deliver the same service.

(I have found people trust consistency. Little things done the same way can have the biggest impact – they all add up.)

#### 8. **Self-Less Commitment:**

Leaders have a selfless commitment to the people they support, standing with them through adversity.

Our team members also have a selfless commitment to the people they support. They care about what is really needed and, as a company, we find ways to measure this through our Annual Reviews.

#### 9. **Culture**

Cultures develop through rituals, beliefs, legends and values. *Culture – the way we do things around here.*

Leaders:

- Are open and talk about what they are about – and do it often so it becomes entrenched in people's minds. People then can decide at the outset if they want to be part of this culture
- The culture must fit and match with Thera's values, aims and objectives
- Cultural change requires long term investment for the people we support. It is a life-long commitment
- We recruit people. not just for their competencies, but also for their values, attitudes and beliefs
- Just like our 'vision' Leaders live our culture everyday
- Culture is led from the top but grows from the bottom!

#### 10. **Leaving a Legacy:**

As a leader you want to make a dent in the world and make a difference in people's lives and leave the place where you live and/or work a better place than when you found it.

We ask ourselves:

- What would you like to be remembered for?

- When someone thinks of you when you have moved on, what will they say about you?
- Will your legacy be one that is positive?
- Did you change your environment for the better?
- How would you like to be remembered?

So do you think this particular code could be adopted by you, your team, your company or organisation?

Steve Raw

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Related codes, behaviours and work cultures which have inspired this Leadership Code:

- Meike Beckford's 'Giving Voice to Values': <https://leadershipintheraw.org/2019/05/13/giving-voices-to-values/>
- The Army's leadership code: <http://themilitaryceo.com/2017-new-british-army-leadership-code>
- 'The culture within you': <https://leadershipintheraw.org/2016/03/01/the-culture-within-you/>
- 'Dosh Leadership Way': <https://leadershipintheraw.org/2014/09/25/leadership-the-dosh-way/>
- 'Doing what is right over what is easy': <https://leadershipintheraw.org/2019/03/07/doing-what-is-right-over-doing-what-is-easy/>
- Warrant Class One (WO1) Glenn Haughton is the Army Sergeant Major (Army SM) issued his guide to Non Commissioned Officers called GREEN LINES:



Green Lines.docx