



“FOOD SAVED MY LIFE”

During the most darkest periods in leadership, I recognise why I am connected with food—how it has helped me and the purpose it serves in transforming people's lives.



LEADERSHIP LIFE LESSONS:

I have learned to be open inquisitive, authentic and humble to understand a persons point of view.

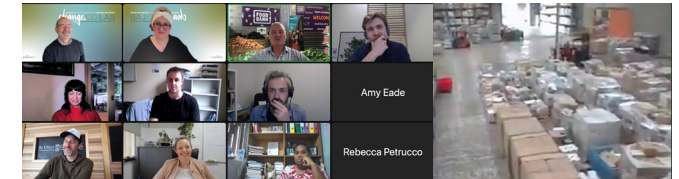
Originally I was purely logic and data driven in my leadership style. Now I understand what difficult time really looks like and how people are affected. You have to help carry the load and the emotional side. It has helped me with making decisions. Everyone counts. Everyone matters...

“Everyone matters or no one matters!”

It's a joy to watch smart people work together as a team. Bring humility to smart people and help them connect to their emotion around others - this is a great privilege I take in a leadership position. Have a strong understanding of your values, your purpose in life. I never stop learning and feel like I'm always on the job training. Journaling, reading, meditation, movement, and I read a lot about leadership and its journey.



I got a lot out of reading this book: **The Attributes:** I think it's your attributes that get you through leadership and how you possess these qualities. The book discusses 25 hidden drivers of optimal performance. It's a great reference to discover how you fit with your team and how you show up for others.



I have seen one of the greatest weaknesses in leadership is Founder Syndrome, where it is easy to get wrapped up in your role. **My role is to be the custodian of the FOODBANK cause and leave it better than I found it for the next generation to come.**

Dave - can you elaborate on Founder Syndrome? What is it, what are the symptoms, and negative side effects?

From my understanding, Founder Syndrome is fueled by a deep desire and belief in achieving something. There is a tipping point where it becomes more about them than their cause. If it's not for them, no one else can solve the problem - the mirror side of that is ego. You are the solution for the problem. I'm very wary not to become like that and it doesn't reflect humanity. It's not about me - its about the food. It's about the kids, I'm doing it to fix the system, to help the mums and dads- there is an opportunity to help be their voice.

This has been incredibly inspirational and like Nick, I have taken 3 pages of notes and could genuinely listen to your advice all day! One of the points that you made is about carrying the load lightly, do you have any advice on how to actually implement that?

For me, carrying the load lightly meant for me to go in the kitchen and cook. Learn to laugh at yourself. I just needed to be connected to putting the ingredients together - just like I did when I was a kid. I would focus outside myself and appreciate the ingredients I was using while cooking.

As a CEO, I've realised it can be the loneliest job in the world. You sit alone and think about the work ahead of you. Embrace your networks. I am fortunate that I have really good friendships - I meet people I click with. We are open to being vulnerable with life and with each other. The greatest touchstone in my life is knowing I am truly enough.

CHANGE CO.LAB STORIES

MEET DAVE MCNAMARA

We introduce David McNamara, CEO FOODBANK, to share the story of FOODBANK and it's mission to deliver the most food to the most Australians in need in the most efficient and effective way.
www.foodbank.org.au/?state=vic

28 November, 2023
 9.30-10.30AM
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