

# Nine Conversations in Leadership™

A WorldsView™ Academy intervention  
Developing a world of leaders,  
one conversation at a time



For organisations seeking sustainable, results-orientated leadership development, Nine Conversations in Leadership™ is an innovative intervention that acts as a catalyst for long-term leadership development throughout the organisation. Unlike other leadership programmes, the Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention works at the levels of knowledge, values and behaviours to achieve holistic leadership growth.



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## Introduction

Nine Conversations in Leadership™ is an innovative leadership development intervention that acts as a catalyst for long-term development of leaders. The intervention is applicable at every level of the organisation and utilises a process that adapts to the organisation's context.

The intervention consists of nine facilitated conversations that occur within a small peer group (comprising of ten people), referred to as a leadership cell. The purpose of each conversation is to share and learn from one another's leadership challenges and successes and to co-create ideas and solutions from shared learning and wisdom.

The Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention fuses organisational development and traditional training in a workshop format. It uses 360° feedback, peer coaching and personal development planning to create strong, committed and aligned leaders at all levels of the organisation. The intervention examines leadership in the realms of Head (Knowing), Heart (Being), and Hands (Doing). It brings participants together repeatedly to explore and cover all aspects of leadership, from organisational leadership to team leadership, and the leadership of individuals and self.

Conventional programmes that address the theory and practice of leadership make the mistake of isolating delegates from the environment for which they are responsible, equipping them with theory that may not be relevant for their workplace, and often broadening the leadership divide rather than narrowing it. This frequently leads to disillusionment - in the delegate and in the people he or she leads - causing disruption, misalignment and, in the worst-case scenario, the loss of skills.

The Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention utilises a process that adapts to the organisation's context and that of the participating leadership cell members. Leaders within the organisation participate collectively in this powerful leadership divide and uniting organisational leadership. This process creates both personal leadership development and organisational leadership alignment, which significantly enhances the organisation's ability to drive change.

## A unique intervention

## Organisational benefits of Nine Conversations in Leadership™

The introduction of the Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention to an organisation offers benefits that impact the organisation, teams and individuals:

- Solidifies organisational leadership around the organisation's vision, values, purpose and strategy.
- Aligns the organisation, supporting clarity of leadership messages throughout the organisation.
- Enhances the organisation's ability to respond quickly and uniformly to strategic shifts and contributes to enhanced financial performance over time.
- Supports talent identification and management of the leadership pipeline.
- Increases team cohesion at all levels through the development of leadership skills. Identifies opportunities for enhanced organisational effectiveness as the vision, strategy, team dynamics and essential operating elements are examined continually in an open, structured environment.
- Grows the self-awareness, leadership competencies and personal effectiveness of leaders in the organisation.

The Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention addresses the following key leadership dimensions through facilitated conversations in which the leadership cell provides the content and the facilitator provides the background material and process facilitation:

- Leading Organisations (Strategy, Vision, Values, Purpose, Community, Culture, Alignment).
- Leading Others (Groups, Teams, Serving and Leading, Coaching, Mentoring, Developing Others).
- Leading Self (Energy Management, Developmental Journeys, Emotional Development).

The Nine Conversation in Leadership™ intervention begins with organisational leadership as a fundamental part of the design. Although self-development, assessment, reflection and personal insights are embedded, apparent and highlighted in every conversation, the flow from Leading Organisations to Leading Others to Leading Self allows the cell of leaders to create the trust, respect and deep levels of engagement that draw out a very profound personal sharing in the Leading Self conversations and explores sustainable methods to maintain the growth and embed the wisdom and learning into the organisation.

Leadership is a choice and its development is a lifelong journey that challenges us and demands commitment to grow the knowledge (Head), the values (Heart) and the behaviours (Hands) required for success. The conversations include activities and dialogue that work in the realms of:



**Head** - Knowing  
Builds knowledge of the elements of leadership.



**Heart** - Being  
Prompts values-based reflection on the elements of leadership.



**Hands** - Doing  
Encourages behavioural changes to improve performance.

There are nine conversations and the duration of each conversation is four hours, with a recommended interval of one to four weeks between conversations to allow the action project to come alive in the workplace.

## Nine Conversations in Leadership™ Information

## Key Intervention Elements

### Creative dialogue

For full engagement of all participants, the WorldsView™ Academy draws on an old African dialogue technique called lekgotla (creative dialogue) to ensure that all voices are heard. The lekgotla process assists individuals to be heard in groups, groups to build a common point of view and become teams, and teams to pursue common goals. Diversity is celebrated and built on as individuals practise the art of listening and building on each other's views in a facilitated environment that balances concept exploration and learning with efficient utilisation of time. Through the use of the lekgotla process, developing leaders learn to listen vigilantly, to synthesise multiple viewpoints, to build on the thinking of others, to work with multiple minds instead of relying on 'solo command' and to move away from the often-instinctive practice of 'the loudest voice wins'.

### Personal development plans

The Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention provides an enabling environment for leaders to grow themselves and their organisations. This growth is achieved through consistent documentation of the work required and regular review of personal development plans to ensure that leaders are leading themselves to growth in order to lead the organisation to growth.

### Assessment mechanisms

The Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention utilises self-assessments relating to the leadership dimensions to provide a platform for each individual's developmental journey. The self-assessments are shared with other members of the leadership cell so that comparison and standardisation can emerge. With the permission of the cell members, the assessments are extended to 360° feedback for each participant at the end of conversation eight in order to provide a reality check against any emerging consensus view on individual strengths and development areas.

### Pre-reading and assignments

With the exception of conversation nine, participants are required to read a section of theory prior to each conversation. Assignments are workplace-related and are not marked - rather, they are circulated to the facilitator and other members of the leadership cell for review and for the purpose of engagement, allowing participants to:

- Learn from each other
- See the organisation and topic through other people's eyes

### Action projects

Members of the leadership cell are tasked with specific action projects to implement the information gained during each conversation in the workplace. Participants are asked to identify an issue, challenge or problem in their organisation, to address this and take action on it. The action projects require them to integrate the three realms of Head, Heart and Hands as they work together to address a specific challenge and create an action plan. Intended as a change catalyst for the organisation and a personal development experience, members of the leadership cell are required to identify goals for the action plan that include tangible, realistic implementation steps that will make a positive difference in their organisation. Each participant builds a portfolio of evidence to keep track of the leadership journey and successes achieved.

# Nine Conversations in Leadership™ information

Getting started

Explore the Nine Conversations in Leadership™ journey and begin to develop a shared vocabulary and common understanding of leadership. Leaders choose to be a leader, and choose to grow as a leader in the organisation.

Vision

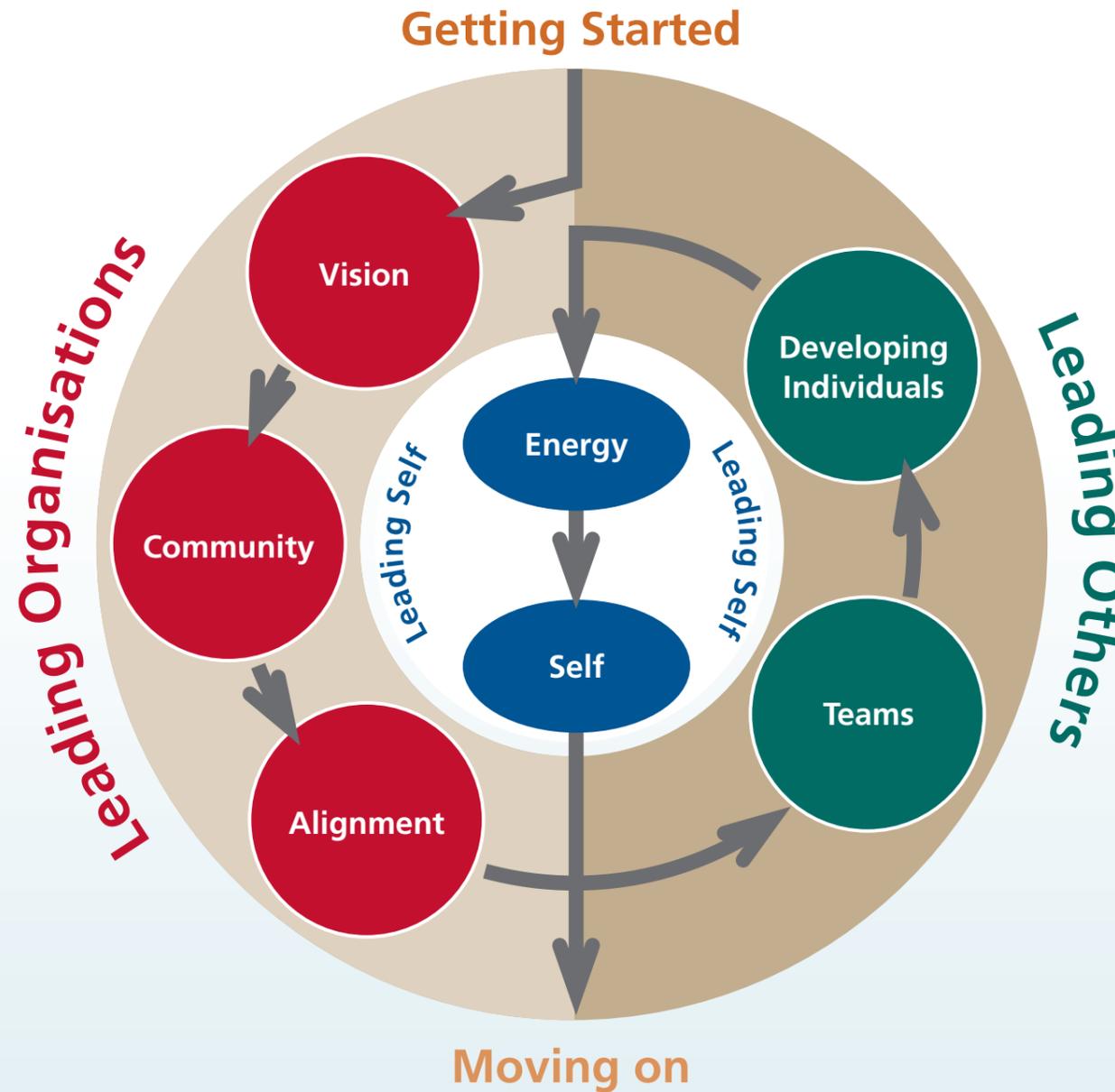
Deals with the challenge of crafting an inspiring vision and strategy for the organisation. Leaders choose to create and communicate a vision that is shared by the community, and gives meaning to the work performed.

Community

Explores the meaning and importance of communities on which leaders depend to achieve their vision. Leaders choose to recognise the power, value and importance of their whole community of followers, and to work towards developing and empowering their community to achieve the vision.

Alignment

Deals with alignment as a critical component for harnessing the community's resources in achievement of the organisation's vision, and is central to leadership and organisational performance. Leaders choose to make their community's work meaningful by aligning individual efforts using both intangible methods of influence and tangible, structured alignment mechanisms.



Teams

Explores the importance of teams for organisational and individual growth and success. Leaders are involved in building teams, leading teams and participating in teams. Leaders choose to take a role in team evolution, empowering teams and helping them to develop.

Developing individuals

Deals with one-on-one developmental relationships in which a leader focuses on developing the competencies and supporting the growth of another person. The ability to develop individuals is critical to personal and organisational success, and is a key element of the leader's role. Leaders consciously choose to become developers of individuals.

Energy

Explores current thinking around wellness and energy as the fuels for performance. Leaders choose to take responsibility for their energy and its impact on the quality of their organisational and personal lives.

Self

Explores self-leadership, the conscious and purposeful mastery, development and nurturing of our inner selves. Growing self-leadership requires that leaders accept the power of choice and accountability for creating the life and results they want, rather than enduring what life brings.

Moving on

Synthesise the learning from the Nine Conversations in Leadership™ journey. Celebrate the journey and consider next steps. Leaders choose in what way to continue on this leadership journey and next steps to develop other leaders.

## Becoming an accredited Nine Conversations in Leadership™ Facilitator

The Nine Conversations in Leadership™ Facilitator Accreditation course is designed to prepare facilitators to effectively deliver the Nine Conversations in Leadership™ Intervention. This is an intensely experiential 5-day course, during which participants experience the Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention both as participants and facilitators, where they are required to deliver intervention content, facilitate conversations, set-up and debrief exercises and receive feedback on their facilitation skills from their fellow facilitators and the Master Facilitator. The process is supported by self-assessment, peer feedback and developmental planning and, although the accreditation course takes place in a simulated environment, facilitators-in-training will be asked to complete activities that normal participants would be asked to do.

WorldsView™ Academy's Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention is accredited as a formal university qualification through Middlesex University in the United Kingdom.

Middlesex University are champions of learning in the workplace and this accreditation acknowledges the robustness and academic underpinnings of this intervention, and that interventions such as the Nine Conversations in Leadership™ have as much value in development as formal university programmes.

Delegates of the Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention now have the opportunity to have their work and learning acknowledged through a formal university credit or qualification, allowing them to incorporate this into their formal professional and academic development.

Please contact us for more information on the Middlesex University Accreditation.

## Nine Conversations in Leadership™ Middlesex University Accreditation

## What delegates are saying

- "Our team is maximising participation in the Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention by constantly questioning and engaging on the issues at hand. We interact between the conversation sessions to share the powerful lessons learned and cascade them to the people who work around us, to the benefit of the whole organisation."
- "We get the most value out of the practical applications of the theory to which we're exposed, and our facilitator makes sure that everything we discuss is relevant to our environment and the challenges faced by the team. The action project tasks that we're given to do on returning to our workplace are all relevant and I can see that they're going to yield ongoing benefits throughout the team."
- "The Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention is revolutionising the way that our management team members are approaching their roles as leaders. Thanks to our large growth in just six years, we've had to take a step back to grow our culture and vision from a common point of view. The Nine Conversations in Leadership™ intervention is challenging us at every level. It is building a cohesive leadership team on a foundation of trust which we believe will ensure the company's continued success into the future."
- "The timing of each session has coincided very well with our business processes, making it even easier to transfer the lessons learned to real work situations."



## About WorldsView™ Academy

WorldsView™ Academy serves the Organisation Development and intervention process needs of companies, helping to translate Organisational Development knowledge into strategies that make business sense. Our holistic range of skills training, certifications and interventions enable organisations to effect sustainable change towards greater effectiveness, in a healthy way.

For more information please visit our website at

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