

# E007 – Building your leadership legacy, Lego® brick by brick

## Podcast Guests 0:00

Leadership's incredibly lonely. [THEME MUSIC]

## Paul Dunlop 0:02

Leaders for the most part are almost set up to fail. The top three issues are always around communication. A strat plan, as you said before, is a living breathing document. It's not something you look at once a year. [THEME MUSIC]

## Introduction 0:17

Hello, and welcome to the Traits of Effective Leaders podcast, brought to you by **SG Partners**. Each episode allows you to hear from real leaders of real businesses, with the aim of assisting you to become even more effective at what you do. Whether you're already a leader, CEO, business owner, manager or an entrepreneur. This exploration of leadership effectiveness covers a range of challenges you may already be experiencing yourself. Now, let's hear from our host, international speaker, Master NLP practitioner, and owner of SG partners Michael Lang.

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## **Michael Lang 0:54**

Hello, and welcome to Traits of Effective Leaders podcast. I'm your host Michael Lang, owner of SG partners.

## **Michael Lang 1:07**

So Mr. Paul Dunlop, when I look at your CV, you've been in quite a few different organisations. Was there any logic to the types of companies that you decided to work for?

## **Paul Dunlop 1:22**

Absolutely not. There's no design in any of it.

## **Michael Lang 1:28**

So you'd be predominantly in manufacturing or wholesaling companies?

## **Paul Dunlop 1:32**

Yes.

## **Michael Lang 1:33**

With all the countries you've been in, which was a favourite one without mentioning names and why?

## **Paul Dunlop 1:39**

Yeah, there was probably one in particular, that was probably in mid career that sort of set me on the path that I am on now. So yeah, a national building products company, I guess gave me a lot of opportunity and put a lot of professional development into me. And probably at the time, I scratched my head and wondered why me, but yeah, so allowed me to probably bring, because I'd been a, I guess, a self taught and self practice Lean person from the beginnings of my career and allowed me to sort of spread my wings in that area, but also really developed me as a leader and gave me opportunity to lead a big team and a cross functional team. And I learned a lot in that role.

## **Michael Lang 2:22**

So they certified you?

## **Paul Dunlop 2:24**

Something like that.

## **Michael Lang 2:26**

You were certifiable before, but they actually put a rubber stamp on it. And then you went into Lean in your own business and with a couple other souls, and now you run your own business in Lean right?

## **Paul Dunlop 2:37**

Yes.

## **Michael Lang 2:37**

Why Lean?

## **Paul Dunlop 2:39**

Why Lean? Why not Lean? Lean, I guess to me, it's an interesting thing, because lean means different things to different people, depending on your experience and your exposure. And I think Lean at its core is a people based approach. It's a very human approach. And it's a very simple approach. So when I think about my why, my why is about supporting people to have meaningful and purposeful daily work, and to feel supported, and Lean is a philosophy, a way of thinking, a system that facilitates that. So I guess as I've gone on, I continue to learn about Lean. It is something, you know, it's continuous improvement, so you're always continuously learning. But to me, it really helps people. And that's why I'm very passionate about it. I love it.

## **Michael Lang 3:33**

Okay. And through your experience, there's all different clients you've had over the years, what's been the biggest aha moment that you've had when it comes down to leadership?

## **Paul Dunlop 3:44**

Hmm, well, leadership for me, I'm not sure if it's one aha moment, it's probably a series. Leadership for me starts with self and self awareness. So I spend a lot of time, I work predominantly in manufacturing, but not exclusively, and I have quite a diverse range of clients. And organisation by organisation, I see the same trends, it really doesn't matter, big, small, family, profit, not for profit, whatever, the same trends emerge. And I spend a lot of time...

Yes, I have a Lean approach. But there's a holistic approach. And that approach often and always involves leadership coaching, because leaders for the most part, are almost set up to fail because we promote people because of their technical ability. And because you're technically good at a job, all of a sudden you get a promotion and you're a team leader, or you're a supervisor, or manager, and then you are now responsible for the people.

The other people are technically good at the job and it's all about people and process, and we sort of go high five, good luck, hope it all goes well and really don't support or equip people with the tools to be successful. So the Aha moment there is that Yep. One is there's a bit of self awareness. But it's also that leaders are not born, leadership is a learnt skill. And it takes time, it takes practice. And it takes centre and support, and guidance and mentoring for leaders to be successful over the long term.

### **Michael Lang 5:18**

I agree with you there Paul, but one of the challenges is if they are going to be mentored, who will they be mentored by? Does that leadership position have the self awareness and the skills and the competencies, and the mindset to be a great leader to start with. So it's a waterfall, right?

### **Paul Dunlop 5:34**

Absolutely. And probably the saying I go by a lot of the time is if you know better, you do better.

### **Michael Lang 5:40**

Right.

### **Paul Dunlop 5:40**

This simple, a lot of it is just ignorance. Partly because of that the role models in the organisation are perhaps not great and we just copy those. I think early in my career, I was talking to a client yesterday about this, is that my early leadership development was focused on more about what I didn't want to be. I had poor examples of leadership. So I sort of went that way. It's just I don't want to be like that, I don't want to be those things. I've worked for a lot of pretty ordinary leaders. So that was sort of the framework I worked within. And then as I went along, I saw better examples of leadership, and then was able to adopt some of those skills and behaviours into my own.

## **Michael Lang 6:21**

Cool. So what does a great client look like compared to a really bad one?

## **Paul Dunlop 6:30**

There's no bad ones.

## **Michael Lang 6:32**

Well, I'm sure in your history there's some that you've lied to.

## **Paul Dunlop 6:38**

Yeah, no, not everyone's a raging success. A good client is somebody who is open and willing to learn. And a good client is curious, a good client is the client that is prepared to take the leap of faith, because often at the beginning, it is a leap of faith into unknown territory, and their ability to resource change. So you can have the best intentions and say all the right things, but when the rubber meets the road, you have to make the time, you have to make the time and invest that to be proactive and to make improvement in your business.

## **Michael Lang 7:17**

Totally agree. So think about culture now, what is the most important aspect you need to focus on as a leader to cultivate company culture?

## **Paul Dunlop 7:26**

There's a few things, for me it's all about culture. It's all about people and culture. So I would say, organisation by organisation, before I walk in the door, I'll know what probably the top 10 problems are. And I'll certainly know what the top three are. And I was pitching to a client last week, and we had a chuckle over this, I said, I know what your top three issues are. So the top three issues are always around communication.

So I will ask people in the organisation, what's the communication like, and they'll say it's, it's no good. It's not the right communication. It's never frequent enough, all of those sorts of things. And of course, there's reality and perception and all of this, but generally, that is true. Engagement is another one. So giving people a voice. I'll always hear, we've told them and them being management, we've told them 100 times, and nothing ever happens, or we never get any feedback.

So people feel literally disengaged, they don't have any ownership, they don't feel like they've got any agency or responsibility over things. And the other one is performance management. So when I look at that there's two sides to that equation. So there's positive feedback and reinforcement and acknowledgement, a thank you, a well done, any sort of reward and recognition system, as well as dealing with poor performance and poor behaviour. And that leaves a pretty bad taste in people's mouth when someone's working hard and doing the right thing. And they see others in the environment, not pulling their weight, and there's no consequence. So for me, culture revolves probably very heavily around those three things. And if we can address those, then we're certainly going to move the needle.

### **Michael Lang 9:08**

Cool. Totally agree with you. So let's then move on to strategy. What are the key activities needed to consistently apply to ensure people are aligned to the strategy? Aligned?

### **Paul Dunlop 9:19**

Have a strategy. Have a strategy, I recommend that.

### **Michael Lang 9:24**

Not just in your head, one written down as well.

### **Paul Dunlop 9:28**

Because that's a really, really good start. So have a strategy. It's also have a very clear and simple strategy. Because this time of year, that's what people are doing. And we come up with these laundry lists of stuff that we're going to do in the next 12 months and none of it ever happens. It gets diluted because it's just a wish list. So a strategy for me needs to be very clear. It needs to be very simple. Strategy must be owned by everybody in the organisation. It's not just a top down this is what we're going to do.

So there needs to be.... So, in the Lean world, we're talking about Hoshin Kanri, which is, you know, business plan deployment. And through that process, we play catch ball. So essentially develop the strategy at a high level, and then we cascade it down.

And we give people a say, to give their thoughts and feedback on what they think of that strategy, and is that going to work. So it's top down, bottom up from that point of view. And that's really how we get the engagement. Strategy needs to be broken down. So typically, with my clients, I'll have a bit of three to five year vision, there'll be a 12 month strategic plan that will be broken down into quarterly, 90 day cycles. And then it'll be at a granular level day to day, week to week, we'll be very clear around, you know, using tools, and those sorts of things that people's time and priorities are always aligned with the long term strategic goals. And that becomes a decision making process. So, for me, that's kind of the core elements of good strategy.

### **Michael Lang 11:01**

When you said that people need to own it or buy in, how would you know?

### **Paul Dunlop 11:06**

That's a good question. Well, you'd know, because they live it, they take action on it. And the other part of that is that they understand it. So again, the goals, the KPIs, the objectives that again, are they clearly defined? Do people understand why those things are important? What is the meaning behind those measures? So again, coming back to the purpose and the meaning behind those things, it's again, it's not just a number, there's a reason why that number is important. It could be a cost driver, it could be a growth driver, or whatever it is, that's the important part is that there's real understanding there, and they can talk to that.

### **Michael Lang 11:44**

So one of the challenges that I've come across is, leadership will release a strategy in the beginning year or being the financial year and go, yep we released it, away everyone goes. And then when we're getting engaged they say, we don't think people get the strategy, I've told them once. Shouldn't that be enough?

### **Paul Dunlop 12:02**

I guess from a Lean point of view, we're focused on creating visual workplaces. So sometimes I just forget that not everybody thinks in that way. So the strategy is there in people's faces every single day, and we're talking to it every single day, not sometimes, multiple times a day. So that communication is not just that once off verbal, it's repetition and practice every single day.

## **Michael Lang 12:28**

Totally agree. So what are the three core leadership traits you think are important to be a great leader? Core?

## **Paul Dunlop 12:36**

Core?

## **Michael Lang 12:38**

I'm sure you've got a whole list.

## **Paul Dunlop 12:39**

Yeah, of course, I've got a whole list. I'm gonna struggle to break it down to three. How about six?

## **Michael Lang 12:46**

Haha. One, self awareness. You've already talked about that, right?

## **Paul Dunlop 12:48**

Yes, self awareness, humility, empathy, accountability, perseverance, integrity, drive.

## **Michael Lang 12:56**

Hang on I said three, come on.

## **Paul Dunlop 13:01**

No, I can't, I can't.

## **Michael Lang 13:02**

You can only have three.

## **Paul Dunlop 13:05**

So humility, empathy, accountability, I'll give you those three. And maybe we can break those down a bit. Humility is probably self awareness, you can throw that in there. Again, if we go back to core Lean principles, it comes down to respect for people, and that leaders, it is absolutely fundamental that leaders have that. So respect for other people. And their goal is to live in service of their people, and their team.



Of course, you know, we're talking about clarity. So there has to be clear direction, there needs to be a clearly defined approach and expectations in the environment. But then the leaders role is really to give those people the tools, whatever those tools might be to be able to succeed, the tools and the support,

### **Michael Lang 13:50**

Do you find some leaders struggle with the alignment of empathy and accountability?

### **Paul Dunlop 13:55**

Yes.

### **Paul Dunlop 13:57**

It's not natural for many people, depending on their own behavioural characteristics. And I think a lot of leaders have got to a point in their career because of a certain approach. And it's that sort of old adage of more, what got you here won't get you there. And so they have to often have a, you know, some watershed, look in the mirror type moments to assess where they're at. And that's really difficult, that vulnerability side of things, and often on having to work with people and take them through that journey there's a lot of therapy involved in that.

But I guess that I've been on that same journey. I've got the bumps to prove it. And there's no judgement in any of that. It's curiosity. And it's just showing a different way. I mean, I can model that there. We can talk about those things, but, you know, people need to be able to get out there and practice and learn. Again, that's all part of the continuous improvement methodology. So, yeah. Sometimes it is very unnatural, but I guess what a Lean approach does is it creates a structure to practice and develop those habits. So as human beings, we're really great at crap habits. And we really struggle to develop new habits and good habits and stick to that. And that's really the challenge for leaders.

### **Michael Lang 15:17**

One of the challenges I have Paul is because the word has been used so often for so long, and people have a certain meaning around it. As soon as you mentioned the word accountability, they see it in a negative perspective don't they.

## **Paul Dunlop 15:31**

They do.

## **Michael Lang 15:32**

I'm constantly trying to figure out another word to use that's the same outcome. And I struggle.

## **Paul Dunlop 15:39**

I'm probably the same because yeah, it certainly does have negative connotations, that there's punitive outcomes and consequences that people think... I see accountability as as a positive, because again, accountability just helps to shine a light on things. The good, bad, ugly, it doesn't matter. And I think I try to be very, I guess in the Lean world we talk a lot about standards. A standard is the ultimate accountability. It's the ultimate point of reference, because what we're defining is what should happen, what's the expectation in an environment? And then we're looking at what's actually happening, what's going on. And that is accountability.

And that accountability looks like when it's going well, when it's going to expectation, what are the things that we need to keep doing? Because often we don't consider that we just neglect the stuff that works well. We need to look at then the deviations in the environment, again, whether it's the process, whether it's behaviour and performance, whatever that might be. And it's really to open up a conversation. It's not to point the finger and apportion blame, because again, if we're coming at this from empathy in a supportive servant based leadership, then we're genuinely curious as to what the problems, or the issues, or the deviations might be, so we can correct.

So again, when that's involving human beings that might be training, it might be giving, again, people the tools and the requirements of the job. It might be actually just giving them some expectation, because they might not know. So again, I'm interested in having a conversation and opening up and being curious around that.

## **Michael Lang 17:12**

Me too. What are the number one lessons you have learned from people's failures?

## **Paul Dunlop 17:18**

I joke with my clients that I've spent a career based on failure, 80% of my career has been messing up.

## **Michael Lang 17:24**

Do you actually use the word failure or mistakes or learnings? What do you use?

## **Paul Dunlop 17:28**

I say failure?

## **Michael Lang 17:29**

Okay.

## **Paul Dunlop 17:29**

It's not a dirty word. We have to get over that. Because, again, when we're talking continuous improvement, most of it is failure. Most of it is failure, but it's failure. It is a structured failure that's based on learning what doesn't work. So life is all about experiments. And I think we're born learners. And we're born to be resilient around failure, but it gets conditioned out of us through our education and through our workplaces. And almost, you know, I guess what I do is decondition people and recondition them in that this is the expectation, and it's fun.

So I guess around failure, I think we have to create safe environments where it's okay. It's okay to fail. And actually, we want you to fail, because in that failure is the growth and the learning. Giving things that go, you know, foster's vulnerability, and that's what we want. So in those safe environments, we want people to feel that there's no silly questions, or there's no kind of weird or wacky suggestions and ideas, because that's where the good stuff is, that's where innovation lies. So failure again, as you know, is like they say fail quickly – but learn. And again, like I said, it's doing it in a structured and methodical manner.

So in the Lean world, we talk about plan, do, check, adjust, and we follow Deming's cycle. So we have some data, we have some information, we're not just assuming things, we're not just flying off and joining the dots and I'm reading Daniel Kahneman's, Thinking Fast and Slow at the moment.

And again, that's how we as human beings go, we just jump to conclusions and make it up, we need some science behind what we're doing. Sometimes it's... we don't know what the end result will be. But we have an expectation and then we have to be open to learning. So I guess the long and the short of it is just creating environments where failure is okay. And in many respects, failure is expected and failure is not a bad thing. It's just an opportunity to grow and learn.

### **Michael Lang 19:29**

Would you go so far Paul as to say failure is celebrated?

### **Paul Dunlop 19:33**

Yes, learning is celebrated. And yes.

### **Michael Lang 19:39**

Okay. Because you know, you're talking back through the school years. You know, we were conditioned as you said that if you get a lower mark than this, then that's deemed as a failure.

### **Paul Dunlop 19:51**

Yeah.

### **Michael Lang 19:51**

And it's emphasised in red, as a parent, when your children aren't going as well, how do you articulate that right? So it's a challenge because it is that conditioning. And it's about that awareness of that conditioning and then willing to break it, right? So everything that we do in the change management space like yourself, it is to say, No, you're not going to get it right the first time. And that's okay. It's getting up and doing it again, just like when we learn to ride a bike. You know, first time we fell off, do our parents say that's it, you're not gonna ride a bike now? Well, no, actually, they support us to get back on the bike. Right? So how do we as leaders support that? And that's the challenge for us. Because if we haven't had recent episodes of that ourselves, then the old conditioning held back.

## **Paul Dunlop 20:42**

Yeah, and I think it comes back to just making it habitual behaviour. So building that into the day to day work, and again, making that the expectation, and it's also, when we're looking at success and failure, it's not good and bad. It just is, it's an outcome. It's an outcome of the process. What I'm interested in is building robust processes, whether that's in our daily routines, whether that's in our workflows, whatever it might be, it is all about the process. And that's the other bit of failure.. It's not personal failure, it's the failure of a process. And we change the process, we change the script, whatever it might be. So again, in our personal lives, as much as our business lives if we're not getting the outcomes that we desire, it's the result of the process that we have in place.

## **Michael Lang 21:30**

And from a psychology perspective, Paul, we say, if you want a different outcome, ask yourself a different question. Because if you keep asking yourself the same question, you keep getting the same answer.

## **Paul Dunlop 21:41**

Or repeating the same behaviours, and I hear the word hope so many times and hopefully it gets better. Hopefully it will change. Well, no, it's not you have agency in control over these outcomes, do something different. And I always say, if nothing changes, nothing changes.

## **Michael Lang 21:58**

Well, you know what I say if you keep doing what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got. But I changed that. To say, because everything around you is changing. So you actually get less. You'll actually get less, keep doing what you've always done, and you'll get less. Because we found that out last year, right? Who saw that coming? COVID comes and suddenly, if you keep doing what you've always done, you will actually get less.

## **Paul Dunlop 22:22**

Yeah, absolutely.

## Michael Lang 22:24

And some people made great pivots, unbelievable pivots, and they did really well out of it.

## Paul Dunlop 22:29

And I think there's an interesting point there is that, I think, during the change process, when I come along and start to challenge the status quo is that the immediate response is we need more people, and we need better technology and bigger, better machines in manufacturing, whatever it might be. And I'm always challenging more, how about let's push the limits of what you've already got. And then let's just see, and people have these self imposed limits, again, in their business, and personally, and when the backs to the wall and you've got no choice, it is amazing what you can achieve.

And we saw that last year, I rebuilt my own business through last year because I had no choice. And so that open mindset and that mindset of being okay with failure and having a guess a bit of a stoic approach that whatever happens is good, it's happening for me, not to me, and you know, being able to work through that step by step. Because things can be last year was overwhelming, often business can be overwhelming. And, again, I think if we develop a clear way forward, and we break that down into small steps, and we're okay with a failure here and there, then we're going to be in a pretty good place.

## Voiceover 23:47

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## Michael Lang 24:02

Paul, when it comes to change management or transformation programmes, besides creating a safe environment, for failure and learning, is there anything else that companies need to be really focused on?

## **Paul Dunlop 24:14**

It's about bringing people along for the ride, you know, the old thing of getting everybody on the bus, but often change, again, is just driven top down, there's no ownership at the lower levels of the organisation or understanding of the, I guess the why. Why do we need to change, we have to have that purpose and meaning there. I think the other thing we've changed and I think as an agent of change is about pace. So you can't just keep the foot flat to the floor the whole time. You have to know when to let off and to let things plateau and let the dust settle and I'm all about pushing my clients hard, but I have to know when to back off and just let things go.

So I think pacing is really really important because I see a lot of organisations that... I call it strategic overburden, there's just dumping more and more and more change. Sometimes it's change for the sake of change, it's change for looking like we're doing something. And people are just so overwhelmed and overburdened, and everything, again, just gets diluted, nothing really gets seen through. And we just have to be mindful of that, it's the amount of change, the pace of change and ensuring that we're bringing everybody along for the ride. I mean, it's common sense. But I see it just happen over and over again, what's common sense ain't common practice.

## **Michael Lang 25:37**

And there's not a lot of sense in that commonness, right?

## **Paul Dunlop 25:40**

Yeah.

## **Michael Lang 25:41**

Because, as you said earlier on, what you do in Lean is simple. And yet no, a lot of people do it, right?

## **Paul Dunlop 25:47**

Yeah.

## **Michael Lang 25:47**

Because it takes that consistent, reflective, proactive engagement. And it takes a high quality leader to understand that, and then it takes a high quality organisation to have the correct, right pace as you're talking about.

## **Paul Dunlop 26:02**

It's very hard to have the discipline to stay the course. That's what I always say, separates success, mediocrity and failure in any... whether it's Lean, or whatever, whatever change process, it doesn't matter. You need to be disciplined around it.

## **Michael Lang 26:17**

Totally agree. Because it gets hard. And when it gets hard, people start complaining, and then you want to make it easy for them. So you back off. But as soon as people start to get frustrated, that's when the Aha moments are going to happen. That's where you're going to have your breakthrough, right? You're want to hear the frustration. You want to feel a frustration.

## **Paul Dunlop 26:34**

Yeah, absolutely. And then that, you know, sometimes I'll deliberately create crisis to get that to happen. But most people I find in organisations use that word frustration, we talk about wasting in Lean. But that's what it is, day to day, people shouldn't have to come to work and deal with frustration. Their process should work. They should have supportive leadership, they should have the information they need, they should have the tools that they need. But day to day, people come to work and have to deal with frustrations that they simply shouldn't have to.

## **Michael Lang 27:06**

Yes, totally agree. So Paul, tell me, you're all about people, process and play. Tell me about this Lego Serious Play. Are you a Lego fanatic?

## **Paul Dunlop 27:17**

No, I'm not I spend most of my time vacuuming it off the floor. My kids have it everywhere. So Lego Serious Play is a tool that I'd come to over the last 18 months. So it all sounds a bit novel and silly but it's actually quite a powerful tool. I'm not sure what you know of it. But um, I guess I had a colleague in New Zealand, who is a is a Lean guy and he started using it. And I saw some of his posts on LinkedIn, I was a bit curious. What's he doing here? So some of my Lean simulations use Lego, but this was something different. And so I, we started talking about it, and then I went through my accreditation, yeah, this time last year with a guy called Michael Fern in Melbourne.



And so Lego Serious Play is essentially, it was a tool developed by the Lego group. And they use that in house for, you know, strategy and vision and problem solving and those sorts of things. So it's really just a riff on brainstorming, and the methodologies that... There'll be an objective, there'll be a set of questions, and a Lego model will be built in response to a question. So it might be a question with an individual or with a team. And the question might be, what does good leadership look like in your organisation, and the participants will build a, three or four minutes to build a Lego model.

And so, how I guess that differs from conventional group sessions is that generally, that position of power will get the sale, the loudest voice or whoever will dominate the conversation, and other people will sit back. And it's not a democratic process, whereas Lego Serious Play means that people have actually built, you know, sometimes people aren't great at articulating or verbalising what it is, so they can build a model, and then tell a story about that model.

So then they can respond to the question and then talk about this model, again, it creates that state of play. It's democratic, even if you said to people draw something, people immediately go, I can't draw. People can join a few plastic bricks together, and it doesn't need to look like anything, but it's theirs, and they can tell a story. So it's really democratic, from that point of view.

### **Michael Lang 29:40**

It's part of the Gestalt model, right? It's taking you out of your head and making it real in front of you with your hands, as part of it. And the other interesting thing though, is when there is discussion, the discussion is aimed at the object.

### **Paul Dunlop 29:55**

Yes.

### **Michael Lang 29:55**

That you created Not you, right? So it's easier for you to then interact with that discussion?

### **Paul Dunlop 30:01**

Yeah.

### **Michael Lang 30:02**

Because the eyes are focused on the object, not you.

### **Paul Dunlop 30:04**

Yes. And I say listening with your eyes.

### **Michael Lang 30:07**

Yeah.

### **Paul Dunlop 30:08**

Which I think is really cool way of putting it. Yeah, that's exactly right. And it's interesting because even though through the the building of the model, and maybe it's not really making sense, and I'll just say just build, just put it together, and it'll make sense. And then as they talk about it, and they talk to the model, you know, a green brick might be a green brick, but a green brick might have meaning in terms, it could be growth. So we're always talking in metaphors. And we're able to tell really powerful stories around it, so there's an individual component, and then often what we'll do in a session is then the team will build a shared model with the component parts of their own models. And then they're starting to, I guess, have some some much deeper conversation again, there's some negotiation around all that. And they're coming up with a shared vision and a shared goal or a shared response, whatever it might be.

### **Michael Lang 30:59**

Do go so far as get them to link up their model physically with someone else's model?

### **Paul Dunlop 31:04**

Yes. Yeah.

### **Michael Lang 31:05**

That's cool.

### **Paul Dunlop 31:06**

Yeah.

## **Michael Lang 31:06**

So that's a great anchor then.

## **Paul Dunlop 31:08**

Yeah.

## **Paul Dunlop 31:09**

And then we can start putting in connections and agents. So what are the positive influencing factors here? What are the negatives? What are the risks? So you can get through a lot really, really quickly and really get to the core of a lot of issues. And it's. Yeah, it's extremely powerful from that point of view.

## **Michael Lang 31:29**

And for Lego it promotes Lego? So it's a great idea, right?

## **Paul Dunlop 31:31**

100%

## **Michael Lang 31:35**

Right. Well done to you.

## **Paul Dunlop 31:37**

Yeah, so I use that a lot for coaching. If we have a, you know, it's not a one size fits all. So it has to be the right application, like any other tool I use. So yeah, I found it really complements what I do, it really sits well with the Lean and the visual aspect, I suppose. Yeah, that's fantastic.

## **Michael Lang 31:56**

So let's finish off with a couple of questions. If I was a manufacturer, why should I consider Lean?

## **Paul Dunlop 32:02**

Because it will change absolutely everything in your organisation. For the better.

## **Michael Lang 32:08**

I got to have some of that then!

## **Paul Dunlop 32:09**

That's why. Yeah, absolutely. However, it's going to take some time and effort to get there. So I think again, a lot of people approach Lean like it's the magic wand and everything's gonna be better in six months. It's not. It will take time, it often is a big change in thinking for an organisation. At the same time, I say we're not throwing the baby out with the bathwater because most organisations are doing 80% of things really well, because they have a business, they have a great product or service, they have great customers. What we're looking to do with Lean is just make that better. And often organisations, again, most manufacturing or not, work too hard to get to the end result. And you don't need to.

I think again, there's a lot of conditioning there when you come back to leaders and individuals that we have to be busy and we have to be solving problems and firefighting all day and that's the badge of honour – it's not. A Lean environment is calm, you know I have that chaos to calm tagline. That's why because most organisations are in some state of chaos. And there is another way, there's not a panacea, but you can be in control of your business, it can be calm, and you can have time and space to get the job done and be proactive. So that's why I do Lean.

## **Michael Lang 33:31**

So I've decided to do Lean, why would I choose you to help me?

## **Paul Dunlop 33:35**

Ah, again, why wouldn't you choose me? Like I said, Lean, depending on your background and experience will mean different things. So I guess there's a lot of people in my space that have come out of the automotive industry. So like ex Toyota or Ford or GM, whoever. So people like that have come out of a very, very mature system and only know a mature system. I guess my approach is that most clients I've worked with, I'm starting from the ground up, of course I've worked in mature environments, but I guess where I come at things is that I know what it takes to go from zero to hero so to speak.

The other part of that is my experience of, I've come from the shop floor. I've worked my way up so I've walked in everybody shoes really. I understand what their problems are. And I keep Lean very simple because we can get caught up in the tools and the Japanese buzzwords and all those sorts of things and it's a real distraction from what it is we're trying to achieve. It is a common sense approach, it's a very simple approach and I try and keep it very practical and relatable, and often I'll be third man up... Most clients have had at least one or two goes at Lean...

### **Michael Lang 34:50**

Oh right okay.

### **Paul Dunlop 34:51**

And I've sort of got to sweep up the mess and start again and almost again teach them more about what Lean is and then what Lean is. So But again, I'm not for everyone. Everyone's not for me. But again, there's a practical and simple approach.

### **Michael Lang 35:07**

Well, thank you, Mr. Paul. Appreciate your time here.

### **Paul Dunlop 35:10**

No, you're welcome, Michael. Appreciate you having me on. Thank you.

### **Voiceover 35:15**

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