

## How are we different?

We are experts in communication, business, psychology and film. This multi-discipline experience helps us understand the dynamics of narrative that surround leaders and their organisations. Our fresh, independent perspective can help leaders see the bigger picture more clearly, to think more independently, and to address the challenges they face more effectively - key ingredients for leading competitive, innovative businesses.

## How does narrative affect leaders?

Every decision a leader makes is based on how they understand the narratives surrounding them. Whether in the form of word, image, sound or behaviour - a brand, a shareholder report, a press briefing, leadership style and structure or internal communications - narratives are the stories that structure information. Understanding the dynamics that feed them is important.

## So what's the problem?

The narratives we send and receive are not always intended. That's because narratives are filtered through a web of cultural and psychological dynamics that we're not always aware of. Often, these narratives are communicated without even passing through our conscious minds. This means we risk sending the wrong message at the wrong time to the wrong people. Then we often misread the response because we're stuck inside a narrative that we can't see. Here's some examples:

- A charismatic leader rewards positive attitudes, yet he discourages opposition. The organisation is stifled, and creativity and innovation suffers.
- A leadership team's client contact is weak, but strong with the sales team. Who is actually defining what customers need?
- A large and complex company becomes its own purpose. Rather than outwards to client needs, increasing amounts of energy are spent on managing internal divisions.

## How we can help

Traditional consultancies may come with assumptions that are just another form of unseen narrative. Our multi-discipline approach helps us to be both 'inside' your organisation's narrative, and 'outside' it, at the same time, and so see it more clearly. Here's how we untangle the web of narratives that surround a leadership team, to reveal more clearly the challenges it faces.

- We work without preconceptions and with challenge, at all times.
- We immerse ourselves in the experience of an organisation at all levels – internally and externally - to understand it holistically, at the same time as retaining our independent view.

- We analyse the web of narratives that surround a leadership team and untangle with the help of multi-discipline, critical and reflective practice tools.
- We then help leaders understand how these narratives relate to their organisation's structure and culture, and to think clearly about the areas that require change.
- We then work with leaders to design effective solutions based on this.

## Some of the tools we use

These are some of the tools we use in the early stages of gathering information and also in the later stages of facilitating change.

- We use film to gather information and engage personnel in the change process. This visual medium is one way of helping leaders to 'see outside' their narrative, and think more independently.
- We involve clients in helping leaders to understand their organisation's narrative, and then later we involve them in the process of reshaping company propositions and practices.
- We run leadership team workshops and one to one exercises to help strengthen culture change.
- We help leaders develop cross-organisation creative teams to build internal relations, close narrative gaps and enhance innovation.
- We coach leaders in techniques to help continued understanding of the narratives they send and receive, and ways of managing narrative gaps and conflicts.

## How you can benefit

Leaders who think more clearly and understand more comprehensively, are better able to see the complex, on-going challenges they face in a fast changing world. Here's some examples.

- More effective and reflective leadership, who understand more clearly how their teams work and how their customers and stakeholders need to see them.
- Better integration of purpose between management layers, or between different operating divisions.
- More cohesive, creative and innovative internal relations, leading to increased productivity.
- Closing narrative gaps between intended communication and received message. You hear what your customers and stakeholders need more clearly, and you're able to respond before your competitors do.
- Better, more trusting relationships with clients, with increased potential for growth.

# Who we are

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**Brendan Llewellyn** has over 30 years' experience in management, leadership and marketing. He has worked as a consultant and coach with over 50 companies from leading multi nationals like GE Capital, Barclays and Aviva through to a range of SMEs, focussing on strategy, proposition development, communication advice and delivery. In delivering consultancy he draws on 20 years' experience in corporate management. His particular focus is the inter-relationship between strategy and communication. He has a regular thought piece commenting on the financial services sector with Incisive Media – 'Armchair Critic'.

**Dr. Tom Cotton** is an executive coach, organisational consultant and psychotherapist, with experience of managing complex teams. Combining his experience in psychology, in both clinical and organisational settings, with 10 years creative practice as a writer and director in the film industry, Tom specialises in helping clients to discover the narratives that influence the way they see and act in the world, so that they can work more effectively, intuitively and innovatively. Recent sectors worked with include banking, publishing, recruitment and healthcare.



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