

# 02 LEADERSHIP

## LEADERSHIP

It goes without saying that leaders are important for an organisation. For the organisations we support – social start-ups – their role takes on even greater significance. Success or failure is largely down to them. So, when deciding which organisation to support, we placed enormous value on the leader. By working closely with numerous social start-ups, we observed five qualities that high performing leaders display.



### 1 Creativity

Exceptional leaders question why things are the way they are. They create a vision that challenges the status quo and try new ideas and fresh approaches to achieving it. They take time out from the chaos to reflect so they can create better ways of doing things. For example, Charlie, founder of our partner [MAC-UK](#), shook up the way mental healthcare is delivered to young people in the UK by taking it from the clinics out into the streets, delivered by young people.



### 2 Influence

Exceptional leaders inspire people behind their vision. They know that social change can't be achieved alone and that they need to build a movement of people working towards it together. They do so by being empathetic, understanding people's different values and motives, and then tailoring their approach accordingly, while always communicating with clarity, passion and confidence. Like charismatic Markos, the leader of [iceaddis](#), Ethiopia's first tech and innovation hub. Markos was born and raised in Addis Ababa and lived in Europe for several years, and that's helped him to inspire people to get behind him in and outside of Ethiopia.

### 3 Focus on results

Exceptional leaders always keep the big picture in mind - the reason their organisation exists. They're smart and savvy, focused on what's important to achieving the best results and change their approach when needed. Results won't come without hard work so they work around the clock to make things happen. But they realise that they can't do it alone and empower others to become 'CEOs in their areas'. For example, founding CEO Tom has scaled education start-up [Enabling Enterprise](#) across the UK in less than five years, keeping them focused on delivering high quality, practical enterprise programmes for schools.

### 4 Courage

It's not always going to be smooth sailing. Exceptional leaders confront stormy seas head on. They'll make tough calls and take big risks to reach their destination. And when the sea gets too strong and they're knocked into the waves they'll resurface and keep going until they reach their journey's end. For example, Celesta, founder of [Product of Prison](#), works in one of the world's toughest places, Ugandan prisons. She had huge challenges in the early days but she's stuck with it and now runs projects across the country changing prisoners' lives.

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### 5 Desire to grow

Exceptional leaders are restless, striving to continually improve themselves. They're self-aware – they know what they're good at and what they're not. They invite and then use feedback from others and treat failure as a learning opportunity. But one thing always stays the same - they're true to themselves all the time. Nikki, Founder of **Hao2**, perfectly demonstrates this. Nikki's a successful social entrepreneur, using tech to transform lives of young people with autism in the UK. Yet Nikki's always looking to develop and jumped at every opportunity we offered her to grow.

### Supporting leaders

We learnt that leaders of social start-ups rarely have people around them to help them to grow, and find it difficult to take time out to reflect on themselves. So we helped those sailing the ships of the start-ups we supported to build their leadership skills. For example, we teamed up with non-profit leadership coaching experts The Kairos Project and offered each leader a professional coach. We also created Discovery, a leadership development programme that took leaders of our partners to Uganda for a week. Both initiatives received outstanding reviews from the leaders.

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### Young leaders

We met over one thousand organisations seeking support. But only a handful has young leaders drawn from the communities that they seek to support. Yet, those organisations that have them at the helm bring magic - fresh ideas that inspire and transform young people. From our experience, young people are best placed to lead new, better solutions to support their young peers.



Take Stephen, the young founder of **Box Up Crime**, a school-based boxing and mentoring programme for young people at risk of expulsion. Stephen was inspired to create Box Up Crime after being involved in crime when he was younger and seeing the damage it did to friends, who, unlike Stephen, weren't able to find their way out. Box Up Crime's programme is shaped by Stephen's life growing up in a community affected by gang crime. Young people listen when Stephen talks, as 'he's one of them' and he talks from experience.

There aren't enough people like Stephen as few rising stars have the key ingredients to get things off the ground, such as business skills, a network and funds. Let alone the confidence to go for it. Worse still, our system hinders diversity. By over-relying on application forms to make funding decisions we penalise those without good written English. How can they compete with a professional bid writer? And we insist that their organisation must be registered as a charity, despite that meaning, in the UK at least, that they'll need to have £5,000 in the bank.

WERE OUR EXPERIENCES OF **LEADERSHIP** IN THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR HELPFUL? THERE'S PLENTY MORE FROM WHERE THAT CAME FROM.

INCLUDING INSIGHTS ON...



**BUILDING A VENTURE**



**PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**



**SUPPORTING NON-PROFITS**



**THE WORLD OF FUNDERS**



**FUNDRAISING**



**COMMUNICATIONS**



**WORKING WITH COMPANIES**

