

The future holds nothing but change



Dave's grandfather opening a First World War memorial in Chester; he had been invited as he had lost the most sons from the area during the war

Last month, we remembered and honoured the centenary of Armistice Day. While it may surprise a few of you, unlike CILT in 2019, I will not be celebrating my own centenary, but I am currently enjoying my 32nd year as an educator and coach in supply chain management, integrated business planning (IBP), S&OP, leadership and change management.

I do, however, feel a connection with centurions, having been the favourite grandson of my grandmother who lived in three centuries 1898–2002. She received a telegram from the Queen and a 'letter from the Pope', which I still have today. My grandfather was also a member of the family in Chester who lost the most sons (six) from the same family during the First World War, and so 2018, the centenary of the ending of the war is of particular relevance to me. Beyond all the poignant memories, I often think about how much change my grandmother saw in her lifetime. While I accept that it was a long life, it was only one lifetime, which in the scheme of things is not that long.

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The future holds nothing but change, and rather than resist it companies need to embrace change and learn to love it. Somebody recently said to me: 'The pace of change today is as fast as it's ever been and as slow as it's ever going to be.' If this is true, and I believe it is, then the winners in the future will be those companies that embrace change more than their competitors do. Change is not only about technology, but also about culture and behaviour, and those companies that utilise an education process and training to enable change will be the most successful and achieve a competitive advantage. As Nelson Mandela said: 'Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.'

Post-Brexit and throughout the next century of CILT, UK production and supply chain companies will need to embrace change with a commitment greater than ever seen before. Growth is essential; there is no such thing as standing still and resting on our laurels. Companies will either be going forward and growing, or will be going backwards, which can only ultimately lead to inevitable extinction. Competition will not get easier in the future, it will get significantly tougher. The strong will get stronger and the complacent will disappear. The successful companies will be those that recognise that the attraction, development and retention of talent will create a significant competitive advantage. People development programmes that are an

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integral part of the IBP process will be an essential element of a competitive edge for the future.

The future talent of our organisations will expect personal development to be a standard part of the company offering. They will also expect a very different company culture where secure-based leadership is the natural and normal style of leadership. Secure-based leadership is a people-centric, empowering style of leadership where employees feel that leadership has their best interest at heart and not the best interest of the leaders. This will be a real change of behaviour and challenge for most management teams. Some of the greatest leaders I have ever had the privilege of working with have also been some of the most humble, caring and people-focused individuals I have ever met.

My belief is that post-Brexit, future leadership will be the most critical success factor, not systems, technology or process. Will you step up to the mark? ☹

Dave Manning FCILT
Managing Director,
DM Integration Ltd.

☎ 07866 313033

✉ dave.manning@dmintegration.co.uk

🌐 www.dmintegration.co.uk

