



How effective leadership can create a nurturing workspace where collaboration and creativity thrive

In the first of a series of blogs, Pernille Bonser, Resonate CEO and Mike Sussex, a Director with the company, discuss their personal leadership styles and how their different approaches complement each other's skill sets.

In the modern business world and particularly in creative practices, the concept of leadership is about more than just authority. It also needs to encompass inspiration, guidance, and creating an environment where individuals can thrive. This is something close to the heart of Pernille Bonser, CEO of Resonate Interiors and Mike Sussex, the firm's Director who recently shared insights into their unique approaches to leadership and how they foster creativity and collaboration within their workspace.

"Mike and I have worked together for probably about 25 years, on and off, he was the second one in to Resonate and I think we have the same goals and ideals," says Pernille.

With her creative spirit, Pernille aims to inspire and nurture her team, providing an open, supportive environment where team members feel valued and empowered to contribute their best work. Mike meanwhile brings a calm, steady presence, honed from his experience in the fire service. His approach focuses on guiding and supporting the team, encouraging them to step back, assess the bigger picture, and find innovative solutions collaboratively.

The way they work together highlights the importance of having complementary yet different skillsets in leadership. When different perspectives converge in this way, it creates a really effective management style. Both Pernille and Mike also acknowledge the invaluable mentorship they've received during their respective careers. Pernille, for example, cites the late Richard Beastall of tp bennett, a practice where she was design director, leading a creative team of 65 interior designers.

Mike spent ten years serving in the West Sussex Fire and Rescue service from 2009-2019 and both he and Pernille worked at international design practice Scott Brownrigg so there is shared experience of a workplace, which instilled in both of them the importance of nurturing talent and maintaining a clear vision amidst challenges.

Their exemplary leadership extends beyond the confines of Resonate's HQ in Surbiton and permeates into client relationships and Resonate's highly regarded approach to workplace design in encouraging idea generation and collaboration. By integrating elements of comfort, openness, and flexibility, the Resonate team creates environments that feel like home—a sanctuary where

individuals can thrive creatively. From barista bars to pop-up food stalls, every detail is carefully curated to foster a sense of community and well-being.

The post-pandemic era has naturally posed new challenges, particularly in reimagining the role of physical office spaces. Resonate navigates this landscape by considering a hybrid model where appropriate and always offering spaces for a wide range of activities from brainstorming and project-based interactions to places for concentrated work and quieter or more confidential interactions. In this way, clients can offer their employees flexibility and autonomy wherever they work, fostering productive interactions irrespective of physical location.

In essence, Resonate's approach to leadership and workspace design is a holistic one that values collaboration, creativity, and well-being. By nurturing talent, fostering a culture of open communication, and designing spaces that inspire and empower, they pave the way for a future where work is a journey of growth and fulfilment.

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