

Gosling J, Mintzberg H. “The five minds of the a manager”, Harvard Business Review, November 2003: 54-63

Gosling and Mintzberg suggest that it is dangerous to separate leadership from management when thinking about organisational development, and that both are important to organisations.

They argue that it is useful to reflect on five different ‘mindsets’, ideas or frameworks in leadership:

- The reflective mindset
- The analytical mindset
- The worldly mindset
- The collaborative mindset, and
- The action mindset.

The reflective mindset

- Saul Alinsky says that events only become experience after they are reflected on thoughtfully
- Reflective managers look at their own behaviours in order to see things differently and make positive change
- They also have a healthy respect for history – both ‘grand history’ and the ordinary, possibly mundane history of organisations and individuals.

The analytical mindset

- The analytical mindset goes beyond shallow or conventional analysis
- It analyses the analysis – appraising the underlying values that inform the analysis and the biases in the thinking
- It is not analysis by volume, but rather purposive reflective analysis which counts.

The worldly mindset

- From TS Eliot – should we not explore ceaselessly in order to return home and know the place for the first time.
- This mindset is about edges – the zone where the organisation meets its context, and/or where cultures intersect.

The collaborative mindset

- The collaborative mindset focuses on managing the opportunities for relationships between people rather than the people themselves
- It is about establishing the structures, conditions and attitudes through which things get done.
- It is a mindset of pervasive management – where everyone has a ‘managerial role and everyone is involved in being good custodians of an aspect of the business

The action mindset

- The action mindset is about harnessing emotional energy

- It is about developing a sensitive awareness of the terrain
- Change has no meaning without continuity. The action mindset makes conscious choices between encouraging change and encouraging continuity.

Gosling and Mintzberg suggest that these are not hard and fast categories, but rather that they are the threads to be woven together by the manager.