

Prof. Hendrik Sebastiaan (Drikus) Kriek

“LEADERSHIP CAN NEVER BE DIVORCED FROM YOU AS A PERSON”

When I first met Prof. Kriek, I was impressed by his warmth and willingness to listen, no matter how busy his schedule was. Soon after, I realized this is not solely a consequence of his personality, but also his background: he is a registered Clinical Psychologist, which helps him understanding human behaviour.

Prof. Kriek was born in the Free State in South Africa. His father was a farmer, so he grew up on the wide open spaces of the African landscape. He studied Clinical Psychology and received his MA (Clin Psych) and MBA degrees both cum laude from the Rand Afrikaans University and the University of Stellenbosch respectively. Prof Kriek received his Doctorate from the University of Pretoria and is a graduate from Yale University in the United States.

Inspired by excellence, Prof. Kriek is focused on teambuilding, leadership and change management. He has published in popular and accredited academic journals and has presented his research to local and international forums. He is former Director of the Leadership Development Centre and Associate-Professor in Human Resource Management at the Wits Business School (WBS) of the University of the Witwatersrand. Previously he had been Associate-Professor in Organisational Behaviour and Leadership at the Graduate School of Business Leadership (SBL) of the University of South Africa and is former Head of the Strategy and Leadership Area of the school.

Since October 2016 he is a Deputy Dean for Research and Executive Director of the PhD Program at IEDC-Bled School of Management. So, we warmly welcome him aboard!

By: Tonja Blatnik, Head of Corporate Communications, IEDC

By profession, you are a clinical psychologist. Why did you decide to become specialized in leadership topics?

A lot of what we understand about what leadership is has to do with the “person” of the leader. Thus, my background as psychologist helps to understand human behaviour, drives and needs and it assists leaders in their quest to understand themselves and their interaction with other.

What is your driver when it comes to work with executives?

I like to be involved in allowing leaders and executives time to reflect and to find that “special” something that is or had been part of who they are all along but may not have been optimised yet. For them to then to utilise this as part of who they are and how they lead becomes an exciting journey.

Define top 3 drivers of the high-impact leaders.

Focusing on them “being” leaders the behavioural drives are the ability to be reflexive, to communicate effectively, to drive performance through solving problems, managing change and leading within complexity.

Does the ‘fuel for achieving the outcomes we desire’ depend on the region we operate in? For example, your background is closely connected to South Africa, but your experiences are worldwide. Could you perhaps define the leadership styles in this perspective?

Leadership can never be divorced from you as a person. However, this “being” always function in and originates from a particular

context. Therefore, the historical, cultural and socio-economic context that shaped the leader always influences him or her. Furthermore, the requirement leaders have to lead in complex environments require them to be observant of the environment they lead in and more importantly what they “see” in the context and how they give “meaning” to what they observe. Thus, again context-specific drivers become obvious. However, there is also a set of leadership behaviours, style and mental states that transcends the local context and is influenced by our global connectedness. Finding this “sweet spot” between these contexts and shaping your leadership to match the demands of the moment becomes the key leadership imperative.

Could you give us some concrete tips how to manage human talent as the key organizational resource?

For talent to be used optimally leaders have to ensure development of their employees are shaped around careers that provide them with sufficient enjoyment, purpose, engagement, achievement and relationship. These five imperatives ensure committed staff.

Name three reasons why companies should invest in general employee talent development, also during periods of recession?

Talent is dependent on employees feeling valued and therefore aligned with their individual purpose; the demands of modern-day business requires specialisation and breadth simultaneously and the need for top quality leaders and manag-

ers are more acute today than ever before.

How do you define your success and the success of (your) students?

Success has always been that moment when you connect with a student and he or she finds new energy and drive to pursue their purpose

How and when did you decide to be part of IEDC story?

About five years ago I connected with Prof. Purg around her book on teams and then gave a lecture at a CEEMAN conference. The rest is as they say “history”.



MEET DRIKUS

My friends would describe me as ... warm, reflective, observant and laid-back

There’s nothing better in life than ... watching the sun set with friends and family

My key values ... are fairness, purpose and justice

The most powerful lesson I have learned ... is that we are all equal

I am inspired by ... excellence