

Abstract

This research examines the part that storytelling plays within a leadership role, with the aim of understanding whether storytelling contributes to a leader's efficacy, and should thus be considered a key leadership competency.

The research focuses on the former CEO of WesBank, Ronnie Watson, and examines his leadership efficacy and use of storytelling within WesBank.

The research was conducted in the qualitative paradigm, and took the form of an in-depth case study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Mr Watson, as well as a number of respondents who had shared close working relationships with Mr Watson. The research was aimed at developing insights into how storytelling contributed to Ronnie Watson's leadership efficacy within WesBank.

The research found that Mr Watson was perceived to be an effective leader fulfilling the roles and possessing the characteristics cited as effective within the literature.

Mr Watson made use of a number of formal and informal storytelling initiatives while in a leadership position at WesBank. These stories aided him in fulfilling his leadership roles of creating a shared vision, inspiring and motivating people towards that vision, and building a strong implementation network to carry out the vision. The research concluded that storytelling facilitated Mr Watson's efficacy as a leader, and should thus be considered a key leadership competency.

Declaration

I, Sarah Gordon declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university.

Sarah Gordon

Signed at the University of the Witwatersrand

On the 4th day of September 2009