

Intelligence is a many-stranded thing

Stephen Moss teaches Australia's chief executives how to get in touch with other domains in their lives, writes **Catherine Fox**.

Some years ago consultant Dr Stephen Moss was among a group of newly appointed IBM executives who were flown to the US to meet the company's renowned chief, Lou Gerstner.

During the meeting, Moss asked Gerstner what kept him awake at night.

"My sixteen year-old daughter," Gerstner replied.

For Moss it was a fascinating example of how a highly emotional personal issue preoccupied a high-flying corporate leader.

These days, Moss spends a lot of time talking to chief executives about leadership and emotions, and something he calls multiple intelligence.

As with a number of similar-sounding leadership ideas, "multiple intelligence modelling" draws on a mixture of the latest ideas on leadership and psychology.

But whatever its ingredients, Moss is finding growing demand for his services from a range of Australia's most senior executives. And that demand has not slowed with the economy.

"Where I'm coming from in my work with leaders is intelligence is made up of emotional intelligence, spiritual, physical," Moss says.

"Intelligence is conscious and unconscious, rather than just what comes from ego. True change only comes from, or is empowered by, when the leaders change themselves."

As a former psychologist, with a degree in theology and many years of experience in the consulting world, it's clear Moss (now a partner with consulting firm Mainsheet Corporate) often ends up

acting as a kind of father confessor to his clients, who include chief executives from banks and the professional services sector.

It's given him an unusual perspective on the major issues for and calibre of Australian chief executives.

"They usually say 'it's lonely up here,'" he says. "It takes a while and I don't rush in and say 'let's talk about multiple intelligence'. I let people develop the dialogue."

But we are deficient in leadership role models in this country, he says, perhaps reflected in the growing demand from senior executives for his advice.

He's optimistic we will be seeing a very different chief executive in the coming decades, as new qualities are needed to lead organisations.

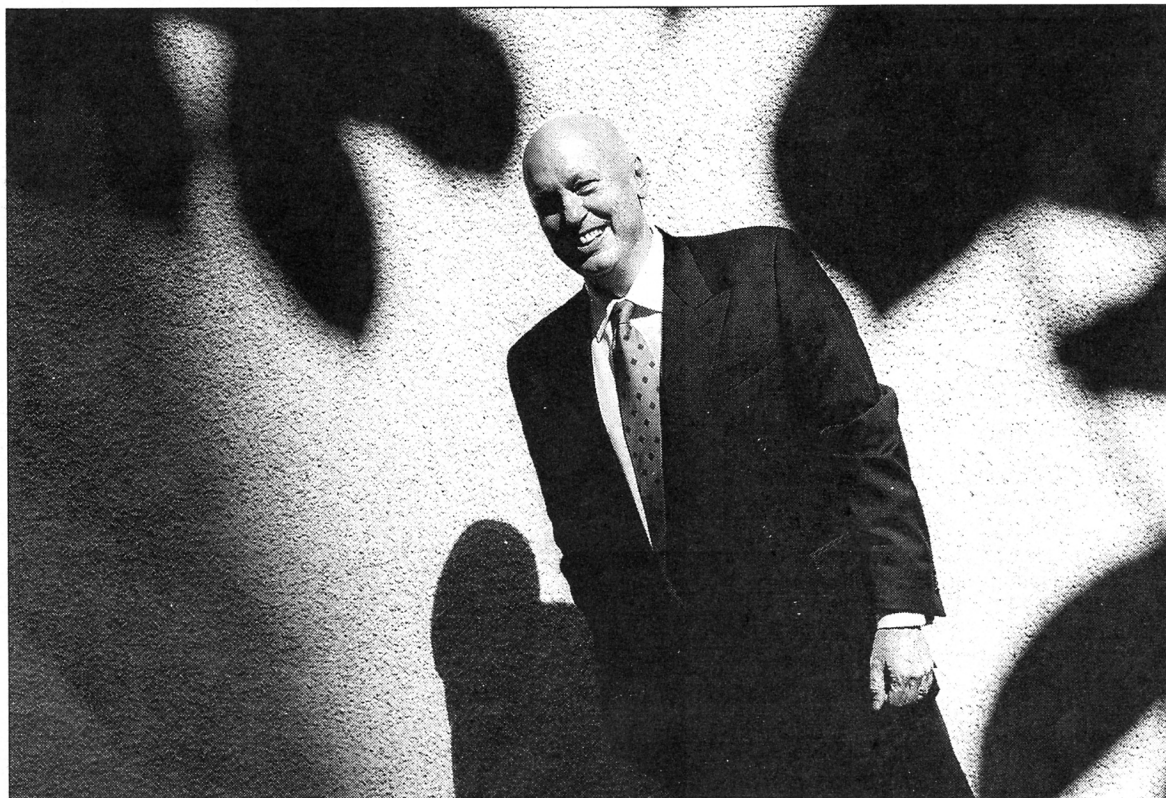
And there will be more discussion in the business world about stakeholders and the broader community, as there already is in the UK and the US.

"We're just immature in our senior leaders in those areas," Moss says. "Around the world people are more open to those stakeholder issues."

Increased stakeholder scrutiny, particularly of the way leaders behave, the rapidity of change and the internet have all combined to shift the psyche of the business community, he says. And there's a different attitude to human capital.

This is being manifested in different forms of leadership, less hierarchy in workplaces and more power to the individual, even in these troubled times.

There may be a temporary move back to security and putting up barriers in a post-Enron climate, Moss concedes, but it will not last.



Stephen Moss: 'True change only comes from, or is empowered by, when the leaders change themselves.'

Photo: TAMARA VONINSKI

"We've moved away from the military model of management. I believe that, in fact, the true leader will be in touch with the various domains of their lives," he says.

"I even talk to business leaders about their dreams . . . and aspects of their lives they did not think important in their jobs."

If anything, he adds, the sombre mood since September 11 has led to the rechecking of values, rather than jettisoning the "soft stuff". And the technology revolution, with its around-the-clock access, means we need to be firm about how far work extends.

"Technology and its liberation has actually meant putting boundaries around what we do with

our lives or else there would only be work.

"I believe people are demanding more of their life now . . . A leader is someone in touch with and knows themselves such that they can lead a group through that expertise, not just to slash and burn."

It's certainly an interesting time to be discussing such issues as large Australian companies, such as AMP, cut hundreds of jobs.

Moss agrees there's justifiable cynicism about corporates but leaders can be far better at handling a lot of hard decisions if they understand what triggers behaviour.

"People who are in touch with themselves and are working from a multiple intelligence framework are

going to be stronger as leaders in any cycle."

If it sounds slightly familiar that's probably because the Moss approach reflects a few different strands of thinking on leadership and intelligence, including the idea of being a "whole person" at the office, and the work of New York psychologist Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence*.

Moss believes his work differs from Goleman's because it's based on a broader definition of what makes up intelligence. He firmly believes anyone can learn to develop different parts of their intellect, even those who initially resist the approach.

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