We saw in chapter 2 how the impact of the leader is key to creating the culture of an organisation: the common practices and beliefs its members share. Leaders also have a disproportionate effect on the climate, or how it feels for those working there. The culture and climate affect the degree of employee engagement, and thereby both the amount of discretionary effort they put in and their intention to stay. Climate and culture have an impact on the bottom line: on the results of the organisation in terms of productivity, creativity and profits, as well as on levels of employee retention.

In this chapter, we look at ways of building teams. We offer examples of how effective teams work together, after first describing the influences on leaders’ behaviour.

Understanding Influences

There are two major influences on a leader’s behaviour: his or her behavioural repertoire and the demands of the situation or context in which he
or she is operating. Leaders’ behaviour is frequently the product of the interaction between both factors.

**Behavioural Repertoire**

By adulthood, our personality, motives, preferences and values are quite stable. It is not that they cannot change, but that they change slowly, barring any life transforming traumas. The mix of genetic inheritance and experience that has fashioned us: which was bringing about rapid learning and change in childhood, has slowed in adulthood after the turbulence of adolescence. Change in adulthood is a more sedate affair. Our behaviour changes constantly but common patterns are observable. Our moods change from hour to hour but generally within the overall framework of our temperament. We can readily acquire more knowledge and skills with effort, but our attitudes are relatively resistant to change and our personality evolves at a glacial pace.

Our behaviour changes constantly but common patterns are observable.

The result is our behavioural repertoire. This is the set of behaviours or common practices that we demonstrate in our approach to leadership and other challenges or tasks. Some are more people oriented, others more solitary and reflective. Some involve themselves intensely with their teams, others are more remote. Some plan meticulously, others prefer to be more flexible and spontaneous. Some celebrate success and deal firmly with poor performance, others avoid extreme reactions of all kinds. The impact of personality on leadership and the specific influences on elements of our model are covered in more detail in chapter 8.

In terms of our leadership model, as we have seen in chapter 5: by adulthood, some have settled into a more operational mindset. They notice details, think sequentially and orient with urgency towards goals and targets. They are action oriented. Others are more strategically minded. They look to the future, think in concepts and orient towards possibilities. Still others focus more on relationships. They are emotionally intelligent, give equal weight to their thoughts and feelings and orient towards the people in their environment. The same is true of the leadership