



Something for the weekend

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Research into leadership has discovered that tough times such as the current recession can often bring out the best in terms of good leadership and innovative behaviour. A good leader can make difficult decisions which can both protect a company's performance and respect the dignity of the employees.

Babis **Mainemelis**, assistant professor of organisational behaviour at London Business School, says that when the going gets tough there are more opportunities for leaders to influence people. Whilst during good times people rarely question their own mindsets, during a downturn there is far more ambivalence and people are more open to questioning their own assumptions he says.

Prof Bob Sutton, a professor of management science and engineering at Stanford Graduate School of Management, has also taken a look at how to be a good boss during a downturn.

Inevitably says Prof Sutton, bosses will have to make difficult decisions, however they need to take account of their employees' psychological needs and demonstrate control, predictability, understanding and compassion.

"The best [leaders] find ways to preserve the dignity of everyone affected and look beyond the immediate crisis, often asking themselves, 'When I look back on what I did, will I be proud or ashamed?'"