

What makes a great leader?

What does it take to be a great leader in a massive organisation? Phuong Tran, deputy CEO of THP Beverage Group, gives us her thoughts.

Global business woman Phuong Tran travelled to Ireland in October to launch Talent Garden, Dublin's Innovation School.

She is the deputy CEO of THP Beverage Group and in 2012 she was offered \$2.6 billion by Coca-Cola to sell her family-run company, but Tran and her father declined their offer and have since grown the business in more than 16 countries including China, Australia and Canada.

Phuong Tran spoke with ThinkBusiness about what it takes to be a great leader in a successful organisation.

"True leadership means taking responsibility for failure as well as success. The two go hand in hand. Only when someone accepts there is no one else to blame, then and only then can he or she develop a plan to succeed."

"Instead of asking, 'Who did this to me?' the question should be reframed as, 'What did I do wrong?' This becomes the far more constructive self-help. As the saying goes, 'It never gets easier, you get better. It is a difficult truth", says Ms Tran."

"But taking ownership means accepting that you are the source of the problem. You are the only thing you can change or control. So, if there is a difficulty, own it. Never blame anyone else. Have confidence that by changing yourself, you can change the environment, too. Leaders who do this are far more likely to inspire the kind of loyalty and trust that makes companies succeed."

Phuong Tran's father is also an advocate for John Maxwell's five levels of leadership. "He is a big believer in level three: people not only follow someone because they want to, but also because of their track record. This is when companies really start to produce results," says Ms Tran.

"At THP, we try to empower all team members to act as if they are the owners of the enterprise, as well: to take responsibility for their successes and mistakes; to stay authentic and retain their integrity. If they stay true to what they believe and are open about what is working or not working, then they can successfully address problems, drive results, and improve performance," added Ms Tran.