New Chapter for Societal Advancement at CCL

For eight years Sam Ray, CCL’s former Regional Director for East Africa, has studied and worked in Egypt, Sudan, Kenya and most recently Ethiopia. The types of leadership initiatives he has overseen there, as part of CCL’s ‘Societal Advancement’ efforts, are now being more widely scaled across Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA). In October 2017, Sam moved to Brussels to lead CCL’s EMEA Societal Advancement division.

“In East Africa we work with actors focused on societal leadership – whether that’s inter-governmental organisations like the African Union, or governments and NGOs – focused on societal leadership challenges, such as empowering young women”, explains Sam. “In Europe we’ve been building momentum in the Societal Advancement space for some time. From October, the aim is to be more coordinated between regions and intentionally grow our Societal Advancement programmes across EMEA as a whole”.

About CCL

The Center for Creative Leadership, a top-ranked global provider of executive education, offers what no one else can: an exclusive focus on leadership education, research and unparalleled expertise in solving the leadership challenges of individuals and organisations everywhere. For over 47 years (25 years in EMEA), we’ve equipped clients around the world with the skills and insight to achieve more than they thought possible through an array of leadership programs, customised products and programs, organisational transformation services, digital learning, Coaching, Assessment, Tools and Support with nearly 750 faculty and an associate network of 1,000 members in the Americas, Europe, The Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific.
Empowering Youth to Lead

Examples of CCL’s Societal Advancement work have included supporting the Young African Leaders Initiative, launched by President Obama, where CCL facilitated a series of leadership development workshops for program participants.

“We are all successful people in this room, but does that make us leaders?” explains Sam. “Over the course of the week we break down some of the assumptions linking success and power to leadership and provide opportunities to explore whether we are truly effective leaders.”

You, Me, Everybody

Societal Advancement is focused on leadership challenges that cut across societies and organisations – like improving health or education, challenging child labour practices, or preparing tomorrow’s leaders to make a difference.

The Societal Advancement team aims to see everyone bringing their leadership to bear on these challenges. “In my experience, societies or organisations that encourage everyone to contribute to leadership processes are happier than those who do not”, says Sam. “We want Societal Advancement at CCL to attract a community of practice; a community that sees leadership potential in everyone, and encourages them to exercise that leadership around society-level challenges.”

“In EMEA we like to use the slogan ‘Change Your World’ because it speaks to leaders impacting their spheres wherever they may find themselves and that’s what you need to take on a societal-level leadership challenge: from the least powerful individual to the most powerful icon or organisation in a society, you need all of them to lead.”

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CCL-designed Women’s Leadership and Debate Clubs have been recognised by USAID as one of the top five youth leadership development programmes worldwide. These clubs, which promote and empower young female leaders within society, culminate in young women presenting at public debates on topics of their choice, often standing up in front of an audience for the first time in their lives. “After being on the programme for 9 months, they are outwardly completely different people”, says Sam. “They are full of confidence and transformed into the leader they want to be, not the leader we tell them to be – we are not prescribing their solutions or debates – they are discovering and expressing that leader for themselves.”

Challenging Influential Organisations

The Societal Advancement team is as invested in working with authority figures as it is in grassroots leadership. In Geneva a member of CCL’s new Societal Advancement team, Dr. Patrick Sweet, now represents an alliance with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP). This ‘Leadership Alliance’ works to stretch and challenge the leadership skills of inter-governmental organisations, governments, leading academics and a multitude of NGOs.

“With its global reach, our GCSP-CCL Leadership Alliance is helping organisations think about what it means to lead in an environment of ongoing turbulence – and the extent to which leadership is shared across their organisation”, he says, adding: “That’s right – shared. Everyone leading together.”
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CCL is redefining the field of leader development beyond individuals to embrace the leadership development for you, your business and the world that together set direction, obtain alignment and commit to imperious change results. CCL believes that organisations need to bring leadership development and capability to the next level of maturity while implementing strategic imperatives. Organizations who can successfully navigate these turbulent waters will be success in managing complex changes they face.

For more information call us today at +32 2 679 09 10, or visit: www.ccl.org/emea