Aiden Thornton, PhD Student

Abstract: Global complexity has increased significantly over the past 100 years. This is evident through the current status of global risks, CEO reports and evolving social structures. However, the complexity of these challenges may exceed the complexity of leaders' decision-making capability. This results in the "complexity gap" hypothesis which suggests that leaders with (in)formal influence over organisational, social and environmental systems are "in over their heads" relative to the challenges they face on a daily basis. This poses a threat because traditional leader development programs focus on behaviour change, but are unlikely to foster developmental complexity in leaders. The aim of the current project is to trial leader development practices, based on contemporary developmental psychology, which are likely to promote decision-making complexity so that senior leaders can perceive, process and act upon the subtle dynamics present in organisational systems. This is a pioneering approach to developing 21st century leadership to tackle the current complexity gap head on. As this is a proposal for PhD research project, we welcome constructive feedback about the design during the incubator.

Presenter: Aiden Thornton is passionate about inter-disciplinary research which incorporates leadership, human development and general systems theory. Aiden has 15 years of global experience as a senior business professional in both management consulting and industry roles across Australia, Asia and Europe. During this time, he has held the positions of Head of Change Consulting at ANZ Bank, and Head of Organisational Change & Leadership for Asia-Pacific at Booz & Company. Aiden has deep experience as a practitioner in organisational design, people strategy and change management. He is now focused on his PhD full-time, under the supervision of Professor David Day, with the aspiration of becoming a scholar-practitioner.

Date: Friday 7 March 2014
Time: 12:00-1:00pm followed by Sandwich Reception
Venue: BUSN 142 Case Study Room
Registration: Siew.Wade@uwa.edu.au by 6/3/2014
For more information: Alex.Luksyte@uwa.edu.au on 6488 2633