The Leadership Capacity Program™

A Decision-Oriented Evaluation Approach to Shaping Leadership Identity, Behavior and Performance.

Dr. Glenn Williams
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LEADERSHIP IDENTITY AND BEHAVIOUR

Systems and organizations play a powerful role in shaping leadership identity. As significant as this truth is, understanding the extent to which they influence the behavior of leaders, their life trajectory, philosophy or ideals to be pursued, was for many years considered to lack the rigor of science and relegated to the realm of mystery.

More specifically, as science has sought to understand leadership identity and how beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors are shaped and transmitted by different systems and institutions, organizational culture has emerged as a critical player.

It is critical, not so much because it is singularly dominant, but because our workplaces can become pervasive in contrasting ways. They can both enable and empower human development by helping us to achieve significant life goals or, from their demands and stresses create conflicts that prevent us from experiencing success in other important areas. What we are learning is that the goals of succeeding at work and outside of work should not be mutually exclusive. In fact, in a competitive market, there is a growing body of evidence that suggests organizations and leaders place themselves at great risk if these contrasting goals are not respected or ignored.

From ideation through to its development and implementation, validating the efficacy of the Leadership Capacity Program™ against its primary objective to increase and *transform leadership capacity*, has been a major goal. Individual engagements with leaders and programs conducted with leadership teams in Australia, Europe, Middle East, South East Asia, and the U.S., led us to identify five anchor points that provide leaders with a foundation for their leadership identity and behavior, giving rise to questions such as:

- Where have I come from?
- How did I get here?
- What motivates me?
- What hinders me or constrains me from achieving my goals?

- Where am I at?
- How do I make decisions?
- How can I perform better?

These anchor points provide leaders with a baseline of what key decisions and behaviors continue to influence their role, leadership style, and the outcomes they are responsible for. More specifically, they focus on a dynamic interaction that defines the importance of leadership identity, how it is shaped, and the behaviors that result from it. While a leader's immediate context influences this interaction, the entirety or gestalt of a leader's journey is equally

important where the whole of a leader's life is different from the sum of his or her parts. Understanding the uniqueness of this learning journey, leaders are better equipped to understand how their decision-making and behaviors affect their ability to achieve the results they want.

WHAT INFLUENCES LEADERSHIP IDENTITY?

There are three key components involved in this interaction:

1. **The content of the leader's identity.**

   What individual leaders believe about themselves, their leadership role, the unique attributes and competencies they bring to the role, their definition of success, what motivates them, the level of self-awareness and confidence they possess, and the dynamic relationship that exists between the values they hold important and their performance.

2. **The channels and processes (or modes of transmission) that manage and shape the leader's development.**

   Leadership is a lifelong learning journey, not a single event defined by an assigned leadership role or promotion. Gestalt theory would suggest leadership is defined through a person's ability to acquire and maintain meaningful perceptions of what leadership is by how it is modelled, portrayed by media, defined by thought leaders and authors, influenced by teachers and professors, and absorbed from thousands of social interactions throughout childhood into adulthood.

3. **The collective actors who ultimately influence the leader's identity and behaviour.**

   Just as leadership is a lifelong learning journey, it is also the sum of countless social interactions in a lifetime, especially with key individuals and institutions leaders have been connected to. These include family, kinship, teachers, mentors, coaches, and membership of a specific group, network or profession.

By understanding the interplay of these three components, leaders can embark on creating meaningful goals that do not have to be in conflict and compete for limited time, energy and emotional resources.

PRIMARY ANCHOR POINTS THAT INFLUENCE PERFORMANCE

Adapted from the work of Kellerhals, Ferreira and Perrenoud, and informed by the seminal works of Edgar H. Schein in *Organizational Culture and Leadership* and Manfred Kets De Vries in *The Leadership Mystique: Leading Behavior in the Human Enterprise*, LCP® has identified five leadership anchors necessary to achieve success that is sustainable. [i] These are:

(1) A leader's external relationships – Leveraging Relational Currency

These represent the key relationships and stakeholders in a leader's world in which he or she interacts with, belongs to, identifies with, is influenced by, and gives context to a leader's identity and experience. Of concern, is that for many leaders, there is a decline in the quality of their social connections as their responsibilities increase; and that the quality of their relationships outside of work have a direct bearing on the quality of their relationships at work. This has obvious implications.

(2) A leader's symbols of success – Understanding Motivational Drivers

How leaders define success for themselves influences how they see themselves in relation to those they lead, compare themselves to other leaders; and how they want other leaders (and non-leaders) to view them. The symbols give meaning to the relationships they are engaged in and which ones they consider to be more important than others. Symbols of success take many forms: it might be a university degree framed on an office wall, a title on a business card, a professional membership, the letters after/in front of a person's name, a waterfront property, or a nice car. It might be a picture of a family on their desk, or a collection of items or trophies revealing significant achievements and travels. To achieve the desired outcomes, leaders must understand what motivates them, while having an acute appreciation for the motivational drivers of those they lead. This has a bearing on the outcomes achieved, and how they are achieved.

(3) A leader's value code – Building Resilient Character

A leader's value code is a set of intrinsic values that influence a leader's behavior and informs the decisions they make. It represents how leaders want to be recognized and what they want to be known for. At a deeper level, there is a question about the resiliency of a leader's intrinsic values, particularly when they are applied inconsistently across different contexts or under pressure to take shortcuts to achieve results. Dr. Williams' doctoral work has explored more deeply the relationship between leadership character and performance at an individual level and more widely as an enterprise, leading to a greater understanding of how organizational culture, leadership identity, and wellbeing affect decision making and performance.

(4) A leader's personal script – Empowering Effective Decisions

Every person enters adulthood with thought processes and behaviors learned and adopted from childhood. Some of them stem from positive experiences, while others may have resulted from more painful encounters. What we do know is that they contribute significantly to the development of a person's 'script' or internal wiring that determines how a leader thinks, and ultimately behaves. Simply, this script becomes a mental model that provides a structure for a leader's beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors. It is written from more than an accumulation of experiences; it is reinforced through family stories and narratives that have emerged from countless human interactions from diverse contexts. To help leaders develop new mental models, LCP® introduces the power of reflective thinking and (re)framing to address dysfunctional leadership patterns and poor decision-making.

(5) A leader's trajectory – Transforming Goals and Outcomes

A leader's identity is indelibly linked to examples of leadership they have been exposed to and have made an impression. Consequently, each leader presents a model of leadership that becomes an important reference point to those they lead and to those who watch from a distance - either positively or negatively.

Leaders, therefore, make impressions in the eyes of others, and in their respective contexts. These impressions are not the result of any one behavioral expression, but much more profound; a leader's life trajectory is a "way of being with others that embodies an ideal to be pursued" (Kellerhals et al, 215).

By aligning their efforts around the power of *the 5 Leadership Anchors™*, leaders have a clear framework for their learning journey that enables them to explore different ways to achieve goals that challenges more traditional methods of goal-setting practice. The framework introduces an architecture for the intangibles of a leader's DNA that becomes part of an

important process for organizations who want to build internal capability that moves beyond results to creating a high-performing culture.[ii]

MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS

Increasing the value of employee knowledge through connectivity

The Leadership Capacity Program™ uses a strengths-based and decision-oriented evaluation approach that constructs a personalized leadership development framework for leaders that measures change and results in terms of intellectual capital and connectivity with a built-in feedback mechanism.

This approach monitors performance of outputs and evaluates outcomes that reflect change of trend or behavior (goals). The decision-oriented approach adopted by LCP® is in line with expert recommender systems used by organizations to manage and connect employees with the knowledge they need[iii]. The value of that knowledge increases as employees understand its connection to their goals and development. Locating and measuring expertise is the challenge, as expert recommender systems draw upon one's social network in a people-centric approach[iv].

Increasing performance by making better decisions

A key attribute of a decision-oriented evaluation approach is that its organizer is, decisions.

Its sole purpose is to provide a knowledge and value base for making and defending decisions. Its strength is that it encourages the use of reflection and evaluation to plan and implement strategies to achieve desired outcomes. It helps justify decisions and requires a necessary collaboration between an independent evaluator (coach) and decision-maker to avoid blind spots, bias, and influence of external pressures.

Therefore, the uniqueness of LCP's approach is that it measures the value and connection of a person's intellectual capital against their behavior and desired outcomes; and ultimately, their performance. Intellectual capital is comprised of four types of capital –

- **Human capital** represents one's expertise, competence and experience.

  It comprises organizational memory (accumulated information from working with organizations), tacit structural capital (learning organizational contribution), tacit relational capital (knowledge tied to the individual rather than the position).

- **Structured capital** is codified knowledge.

- **Relational capital** represents the nature and purpose of important relationships and the significance of how they interact.

- **Social capital** looks at one's social status and reputation, indicating that it's not just <u>what</u> you know but <u>who</u> you know.

The LCP Coaching Accelerator™

A feature of the Leadership Capacity Program is the online LCP Coaching Accelerator™. It captures and distils client responses into a series of personalized journals that are foundational to the 90-day engagement cycles used by LCP-certified executive coaches and leadership development professionals.

Also unique to the LCP Coaching Accelerator is, users can identify and leverage relevant data from previously completed quantitative and qualitative assessments, and evaluate its usefulness against current challenges, goals, and desired outcomes.

To enhance the user-engagement process and reduce the possible 'drop-out' rate of time-poor, busy leaders (particularly those in executive roles), the online reflective process was segmented into five phases, with users receiving a tailored journal at the completion of each phase. These journals become the foundation of the leadership development journey.

While sustainable results over the long-term are the goal, the results-orientation of LCP® gives organizations the ability to gain momentum and measure short-term success using 90-day engagement cycles, usually in the context of a longer 6 to 12-month engagement.

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[i] Jean Kellerhals, Cristina Ferreira, and David Perrenoud, "Kinship Cultures and Identity Transmissions," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 2 (March 2002): 214-217); Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, 4th ed (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010); Manfred Kets De Vries, *The Leadership Mystique: Leading Behavior in the Human Enterprise*, 2nd ed (Harlow, England: Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2006).

[ii] Dave Ulrich, *The Leadership Capital Index: Realizing the Market Value of Leadership* (Oakland, CA: Barrett-Koehler Publishers, 2015).

[iii] Tim Reichling and Volker Wulf, "Expert Recommender Systems in Practice: Evaluating Semi-Automatic Profile Generation," *CHI 2009-Expertise/People Finding*, (April 2009): 59-68; Systems used by recruitment agencies have yet to reach the same level of sophistication as other industries, as they are more reliant upon their consultant's intuition.

[iv] Richards, D., et al. (2009). A Knowledge Mapping Approach to Facilitate Strategic Human Resource and Knowledge Management. 20th Australasian Conference on Information Systems. Melbourne, University of Wollongong Research Online: pp. 712-721.

Achieving **Breakthrough** Alignment™