# The LCP Leadership Accelerator™

## Improving Leader Development and Performance Using A Decision-Oriented Evaluation Approach

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Version 6.0

Updated: 22 September 2021

## Shaping identity and performance

Systems and organizations play a powerful role in shaping the identity and performance of those in leadership roles. 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.

*"…organizational culture has emerged as a critical player for developing people and seeing them flourish"*

As science has sought to understand the impact of a person's identity and how that person's beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors are shaped and transmitted by different systems and institutions, organizational culture has emerged as a critical player for developing people and seeing them flourish.

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 are ignored.

## The importance of asking discerning questions

Validating the efficacy of the LCP Leadership Accelerator™ against its primary objective to increase and *transform leadership capacity*, has been a major goal from the beginning. From engagements with leaders and their teams in Australia, Europe, Middle East, South-East Asia, and the U.S., LCP Global identified five anchor points for leaders that when aligned, provide a foundation for their success. These anchors give rise to questions such as:

*"…five anchor points for leaders that when aligned, provide a foundation for their success"*

- Where have I come from? What, and who, has influenced me the most?

- What motivates me? When am I fulfilled the most? What energizes me?

- What influences the way I make decisions? How do I manage risk?

- What hinders me or constrains me from achieving my goals?

- How can I perform better? In which areas do I need to develop?

- What relationships are most important to my wellbeing and performance?

- How well am I able to change direction or adapt my goals when it is necessary?

Reflecting on these questions provide leaders with a greater understanding of how they make key decisions, what resulting behaviors or actions are likely to occur, and how these factors continue to influence their role, relationships, goal-setting activities, and the outcomes they are responsible for. This reflection highlights the dynamic interaction between a leader's identity, how it is shaped, and how it continues to impact results.

*"…the dynamic interaction between a leader's identity, how it is shaped, and how it continues to impact results."*

While a leader's immediate context influences this interaction, the entirety or gestalt of that person's journey is equally important where the whole of his or her life is different from the sum of his or her parts. Understanding the uniqueness of this learning journey, business owners and leaders are better equipped to understand how their decision-making behaviors affects their ability to achieve the results they want.

### How leaders perceive themselves and define their roles

There are three key areas that influence how leaders perceive themselves and define their roles, and performance is impacted by the interconnectivity between them:

1. **Self-identity and awareness**

   *"…what leaders believe about themselves"*

   This is what leaders believe about themselves, their role, their unique attributes and competencies, what defines success, what motivates them, their level of self-awareness and confidence, and the relationship between what they value the most and what they want to achieve.

2. **How meaning is attached to what leaders learn, and how this influences their goals**

   *"…what leaders learn"*

   Leadership is a lifelong learning journey, not defined by a single event or an assigned role or promotion. It is defined by a person's ability to process what leadership is by how it is modelled, defined and portrayed by others, and absorbed from thousands of social interactions throughout childhood into adulthood. This impacts how leaders identify the goals they want to achieve and how they are prioritised.

### 3. The collective influence of others

*"… how others influence leaders and the goals they want to achieve"*

Leaders are also the sum of countless social interactions over a lifetime, especially with key individuals and organizations they have been connected to (including family / kinship, teachers, mentors, coaches, and being a member of a specific group, network or profession). While some of these are more influential than others, understanding how others influence our role as leaders and the goals we want to achieve is important when evaluating the roadblocks we encounter, and how we respond to them.

By understanding the interplay of these three components, leaders can create meaningful goals and find a way to resolve conflicts that frequently occur that demand a significant investment of time, energy, and emotional resources to manage.

### Primary anchor points that influence a leader's development and performance

Adapted from the work of Kellerhals, Ferreira and Perrenoud, and informed by the 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 Global identified five leadership anchors across three levels of leadership that are necessary to achieve sustainable success.[i] These are:

*Leveraging Relational Currency*

#### (1) A leader's external relationships

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 his or her 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 how the quality of their relationships outside of work have a direct bearing on the quality of their relationships at work. This has obvious implications.

The energy and benefits gained from the development of key relationships in the life of a leader are vitally important, just as it is to be aware of how stresses within the workplace can erode the effectiveness of leaders in managing themselves and developing their staff. The fallout from this can often be projected onto key relationships outside of work. In the context of the corporate lifecycle and the particular lifestage of the business, how leaders manage this area of their lives can have a big impact on how they navigate through to the next lifestage of the business.

*Understanding Motivational Drivers*

#### (2) A leader's symbols of success

How leaders define success influences how they see themselves in relation to their peers, as well as those they lead. Symbols of success 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, a nice car, or remuneration package. 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 their goals, leaders benefit from having a robust understanding of what motivates them and those they lead. This has a bearing on *how* those goals are achieved and the length of time invested in achieving them. A leader's ability to be resilient and focused is strongly linked to momentum and the energy they derive from it.

*Building Resilient Character*

### (3) A leader's value code

A leader's value code is a set of intrinsic values that influences their behavior and informs the decisions they make. It represents how they want to be recognized and what they want to be known for. At a deeper level, there is a question about the resiliency of these values and how they apply across different contexts or when leaders are under pressure to achieve results.

My doctoral research highlighted the deep connection between leadership character and performance at an individual level and explored how this played out in the larger context of an enterprise. Understanding the importance of a leader's value code leads to a greater appreciation for how organizational culture, leadership identity, and wellbeing affect decision making and performance.

In the LCP Leadership Accelerator, participants are encouraged to reflect on how certain beliefs and behaviors have been adopted over time, from childhood through to adulthood, that inform their values and therefore their decisions. For example, growing up in a family environment where there was constant conflict can lead to the development of a peacekeeping value and will influence a person's disposition towards conflict in the workplace.

*Empowering Effective Decisions*

### (4) A leader's personal script

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.

This script becomes a mental model that frames how a person's beliefs, assumptions, and behaviors interact together. It is written from more than an accumulation of experiences and is reinforced through family stories and narratives that have emerged from countless human interactions and different contexts. According to Charles Duhigg, a person's mental model can lead to what he calls, *Cognitive Tunneling.* This "can cause people to become overly focused on whatever is directly in front of them or become preoccupied with immediate tasks…we latch on to the easiest and most obvious stimulus, often at the cost of common sense."[ii]

To help leaders develop new mental models the LCP methodology elevates the importance of reflective thinking and the strategy of reframing those experiences that otherwise have the potential to contribute to dysfunctional leadership patterns and limiting beliefs that lead to poor decision-making.

## (5) A leader's trajectory

A leader's identity and sense of what a leader is, is indelibly linked to examples of leadership a person has been exposed to and that made an impression. These different impressions become an important reference point for people as they lead others, and for those who watch from a distance. Often leaders are unaware of just how many people are influenced by the way they lead. 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, 2002, 215).

By aligning their efforts around *the 5 Leadership Anchors™*, leaders adopt a new framework for achieving goals that is different to more traditional methods of goal-setting practice. This framework highlights the importance of a leader's DNA, and how their capacity can reduce the effectiveness of their competence as they struggle to resolve the conflicts that occur between their business goals, professional goals, and personal goals.

This awareness helps organizations move beyond concentrating their efforts on specific job competency to focusing on empowering their staff to align their efforts around *the 5 Leadership Anchors* that helps to build a high-performing culture that is more sustainable.[iii] This creates a new trajectory for leaders and their organizations.

## The LCP Leadership Accelerator: A framework for measuring the relationship between active learning and results

### Increasing the value of employee knowledge through connectivity

Introducing The LCP Leadership Accelerator into an organization allows leaders to construct a personalized leadership development framework that measures change and results in terms of intellectual capital ('what they know') and how their development and growth (strengths-based) connects with their goals. A built-in feedback mechanism encourages leaders to evaluate their progress every 90-days.

This reflects a decision-oriented approach that monitors performance of outputs and evaluates outcomes that reflect change of trend or behavior (goals). This is in line with expert recommender systems used by organizations to manage and connect employees with the knowledge they need.[iv]

The value of that knowledge increases as employees understand its connection to their goals and development, and as they apply their learning to new goals that supersede the previous ones. Locating and measuring expertise is the challenge, as expert recommender systems draw upon one's social network in a people-centric approach.[v]

- **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 (internal knowledge that is shared).

- **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.

### Tracking goals and development

The LCP Leadership Accelerator captures and distils client responses into a series of personalized reports that are foundational to their 90-day goals.

To enhance the online experience and reduce the possible 'drop-out' rate of time-poor, busy leaders, the reflective process is segmented into five online phases with participants receiving a tailored report at the completion of each phase.

*"…apply those insights as they reset their goals for subsequent 90-day periods"*

These reports are pivotal to the leaders' development journey over each quarter of a 12-month period as they reflect on what they have learned and apply those insights as they reset their goals for subsequent 90-day periods. Participants can also nominate a coach, mentor, manager, or friend to receive a copy of their reports.

While sustainable results over the long-term are the goal, the LCP Leadership Accelerator gives individuals and organizations the ability to gain momentum and measure short-term success using 90-day engagement cycles.

More information can be obtained at www.lcp-global.com.

[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] Charles Duhigg, *Smarter, Faster, Better: The Transformative Power of Real Productivity* (New York, NYC: Random House, 2016), 77.

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

[iv] 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.

[v] 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™