WHITE PAPER

Center for Creative Leadership

Models for the Development of Leadership

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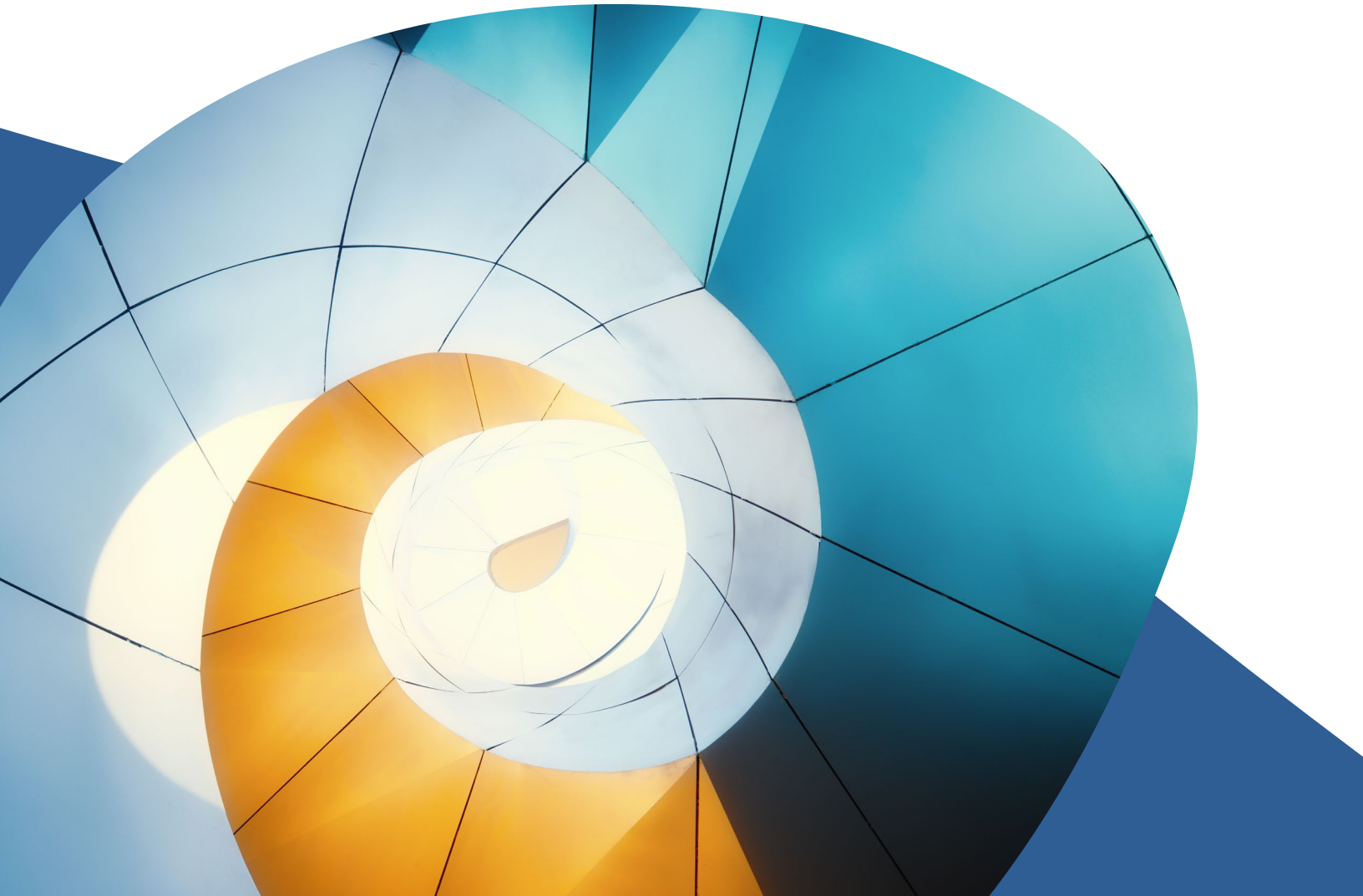

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Introduction

For 50+ years, the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)® has pioneered top-ranked leadership development solutions for everyone from community leaders to Fortune 500 CEOs, inspiring organizations around the world — including 2/3 of the Fortune 1000 — to drive remarkable transformation at every level.

A globally recognized pioneer and innovator in leadership development, we operate as a nonprofit educational organization with a mission to "advance the understanding, practice, and development of leadership for the benefit of society worldwide."

One way we fulfill our mission is by offering a diverse range of leadership development programs for all levels of leaders, from emerging talent to chief executives, their teams, and organizations across all sectors globally. Our programs leverage research-based models and frameworks to propel leaders forward, stimulating new insights and actions through experiences, feedback, dialogue, and reflection (McCauley & Palus, 2021). Our approach aligns with the field of leadership development, which is characterized by frameworks and models that offer simple, concrete ways to teach topics (Day et al., 2009)

This paper showcases a collection of leadership models developed by our expert staff, representing decades of research and practical application. From foundational frameworks introduced when we opened our doors in 1970, to cutting-edge models born from our latest research initiatives, these tools embody our commitment to advancing leadership development. Many of these models, such as 70-20-10, SBI, and Direction – Alignment – Commitment (DAC)™, have become staples in the human resources lexicon, demonstrating our influence in shaping leadership practices globally.

Our approach of distilling complex leadership concepts into accessible, actionable models reflects our mission to empower leaders at all levels. By creating easy-to-understand and -apply frameworks, we enable leaders to integrate these powerful tools into their organizations and spread effective leadership practices throughout their networks.

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TARGET AUDIENCE

This paper was written for leadership trainers, human resources professionals, coaches, consultants, academics, and other practitioners who seek to understand, apply, and reference our frameworks in their work. Whether you're involved in designing leadership curricula, nurturing high-potential employees, or simply enriching your own understanding of the field, you'll discover a repository of our time-tested models within these pages, complete with citations and descriptions to support your future teaching, training, and scholarly endeavors.

Definition and Objectives of CCL Leadership Models

In leadership development, a model is generally defined as a simplified representation or abstraction of a complex system or concept. Models (sometimes labeled "frameworks") are conceptual structures that offer *high-level, informed viewpoints* on topics, issues, or processes. These tools vary in intent, from describing phenomena (descriptive models) to guiding actions aimed at producing specific outcomes (prescriptive models). Researchers and practitioners often present models in graphic form, as visual representations provide an engaging and effective way to organize and communicate large amounts of information. As our understanding of leadership evolves, these models continue to play a crucial role in advancing both the theory and practice of leadership development, helping leaders navigate increasingly complex organizational environments.

We've developed numerous applications of models in leadership development. Practically, our models offer simple, concrete ways to teach leadership topics. For instance, the Comprehensive Resilience Framework (Fernandez, Clerkin, Ruderman, 2020) provides clear, specific recommendations for behavioral changes that leaders can make to strengthen their resilience in challenging times. The model exemplifies our approach of bridging research and practice — it represents a universal definition of resilience spanning multiple fields and offers researchers a way to operationalize resilience, connecting desired outcomes to specific practices.

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We offer a diverse portfolio of models, each designed to address critical leadership challenges:

1. **Process models,** where we're changing how leaders:

- Transfer learning from the classroom to the workplace
- Grow by stepping out of their comfort zone
- Design high-impact developmental experiences
- Lead and work with diversity
- Drive organizational change
- Spearhead digital transformation
- Craft powerful communications
- Exert influence
- Engage in transformative conversations
- Champion equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Deliver impactful feedback
- Craft and execute leadership strategies
- Master the art of delegation

2. **Topical models,** where we're deepening understanding of:

- High-impact developmental activities
- Workplace bias
- Resilience
- Core leadership skills
- Influence
- Leadership cultures
- Learning agility
- Team effectiveness

3. **Organizational framework:** Our Model of Leader Competencies provides a comprehensive structure for understanding and developing leader competencies.

4. **Impact assessment:** We've developed the Leadership Development Impact (LDI) framework to measure and enhance the impact of leadership development initiatives.

Origin of CCL Models

At CCL, we've been developing powerful leadership heuristics for over 5 decades. Our models serve as cognitive shortcuts, allowing leaders to navigate complex challenges efficiently. They embody our commitment to bridging rigorous academic study on adult learning and development with our extensive real-world experience, reflecting our commitment to research-based, practical leadership solutions.

In general, evidence in support of our models is derived from a combination of (1) scientific research, (2) professional judgment, and (3) stakeholder usage. The table below highlights our research programs and the resulting models they've produced.

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NAME GIVEN TO THE RESEARCH PROGRAM	YEARS IN RESEARCH	RESULTING MODEL(S)	SEMINAL BOOK BASED ON THE RESEARCH
Lessons of Experience	1987–1988 1990 1997 2001 2003 2013	70-20-10 Development Framework Anatomy of a Learning Experience Fundamental 4 Components of Learning Agility Fundamental 4 Components of Leadership	*The Lessons of Experience: How Successful Executives Develop on the Job* by Morgan W. McCall, Michael M. Lombardo & Ann M. Morrison, 1988.
Key Events	1981–1987	Model of Leader Competencies	*Key Events in Executives' Lives* by Lindsey Homes & Morgan McCall, 1987.
Managerial Stress Research Project	1990–1992	Anatomy of a Learning Experience	*Learning How to Learn from Experience: Impact of Stress and Coping* by Kerry A. Bunker & Amy D. Webb, 1992.
Line Manager Competency Modeling	1990–1993	Model of Leader Competencies	*The Working Leader: The Triumph of High Performance Over Conventional Management Principles* by Leonard R. Sayles, 1999.
Relational Leadership	1995–2021	Direction – Alignment – Commitment (DAC)™ 3 Types of Organizational Leadership Cultures Change Leadership / Change Management	*The Deep Blue Sea: Rethinking the Source of Leadership* by Wilfred Drath, 2001.

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NAME GIVEN TO THE RESEARCH PROGRAM	YEARS IN RESEARCH	RESULTING MODEL(S)	SEMINAL BOOK BASED ON THE RESEARCH
Managerial Effectiveness in a Global Context	1998–2002	Model of Leader Competencies	*Success for the New Global Manager: How to Work Across Distances, Countries, and Culture* by Maxine Dalton, Chris Ernst, Jennifer Deal & Jean Leslie, 2002.
Leadership Across Differences	2001–2008	Boundary Spanning Leadership	*Boundary Spanning Leadership: Six Practices for Solving Problems, Driving Innovation, and Transforming Organizations* by Chris Ernst & Donna Chrobot-Mason, 2010.
Change Leadership for Organization Culture Transformation	2004–2018	Change Leadership / Change Management 3 Types of Organizational Leadership Cultures	*Transforming Your Leadership Culture* by John B. McGuire & Gary Rhodes, 2009.
Neuroscience and Leadership	2010–2021	Comprehensive Resilience Framework	*Resilience That Works: Eight Practices for Leadership and Life* by Marian N Ruderman, Cathleen Clerkin & Katya C Fernandez, 2022.
Leadership Strategy	2013–2014	3 Types of Organizational Leadership Cultures Advanced Strategic Leadership Change Leadership / Change Management	*Becoming a Strategic Leader: Your Role in Your Organization's Enduring Success* by Richard L. Hughes, Katherine M. Beatty & David Dinwoodie, 2014.

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Model Use

Since we first opened our doors, we've examined how people learn, grow, and change over their careers as a result of our programs. We've worked closely with leaders to explore the challenges they face in their work and nonwork lives, the networks they build, and the hardships they encounter (Van Velsor, McCauley & Moxley, 1998). Our programs have been refined as we worked closely with different types of leaders, conducted action research, studied leadership effectiveness and development, evaluated our programs and their impact on leadership, and brought in top talent to expand our thinking. Our dedication to expanding human potential in an ever-changing world has allowed us to continually shift our understanding of effective leadership producing new concepts, innovations, and development models over the years.

In the 1990s, our understanding of leadership shifted from individuals in positions of authority to groups that operate within leadership, reframing leadership as a social, relational, and collective construct. As such, our view of leadership development integrates the growth of an individual who assumes a leadership role with an individual's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and participate in the processes of leadership. As we believe that leadership is a social process, our programs aim to improve the capacity of both those engaged in leadership processes as well as those who are actively in leadership roles.

In the early 2000s, we began focusing on the development and practice of organizational leadership (OL). As leaders faced increasingly complex challenges, we shifted attention to how leadership relates to thinking and working together as part of a dynamic system within an organization. This shift established systems-level mindsets, frameworks, and the capability to develop leadership that was shared between both leaders and stakeholders inside and outside of organizations — birthing the Advanced Strategic Leadership, 3 Types of Organizational Leadership Cultures, Change Leadership / Change Management, and Boundary Spanning Leadership that remain in use in our OL practice and offerings today.

In 2010, a group of CCL researchers sought to understand how advances in neuroscience might

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be incorporated into our leadership development work. This work started by understanding how brain functioning relates to leadership, understanding the work of practitioners in this area, and collaborating with neuroscience experts. The multi-year effort (1) translated scientific findings and expert contemplative practices into our leadership development work and (2), through a series of quasi-experiments, examined the fidelity of these interventions by helping enhance and accelerate the development of leaders. We learned that we can help leaders lead better by focusing on the importance of mindfulness (meditation, self-regulation), cognition (brain health, brain training, focus), emotion (stress regulation, positivity, emotion, and sleep), social connection (communication, reciprocity, relationships), physical health (sleep, nutrition, exercise) and technology (biofeedback and digital health).

This groundbreaking initiative set us apart from traditional leadership development providers who focused on behavioral adaptation and the acquisition of competencies. Competency models have been around since the 1970s as a means of classifying the behaviors necessary for leadership positions. Competency models still play an important role in leadership development, but with the inclusion of neuroscience, CCL began to work with the idea of the "whole" leader — emphasizing the importance of expanding human potential through nurturing a person's whole self and recognizing the role this plays in leadership. In the words of our colleagues, "We argue that examining less visible forces such as leaders' physiological, emotional, and mental processes is needed to broaden the focus and increase the efficacy of leadership development" (Ruderman, Clerkin, Connolly, 2014, p. 4). This decade-long program of research led to the Comprehensive Resilience Framework, the use of new practices and tools, and numerous publications.

In 2020, we expanded our focus to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). CCL's practices evolved alongside many leaders we worked with who recognized that EDI is a core business function. The REAL™ framework and targeted EDI initiatives were created to encourage leaders to take responsibility for contributing to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout their organizations and society more broadly. The Beyond Bias™ model was also born out of this work. These contributions further established CCL as a leading force in the EDI space. Our work in this space started when we published our first book on women's leadership in 1992 (*Breaking the Glass Ceiling*). Since then, 12 additional books and over 110 papers have been published by CCL faculty on topics such as the challenges, barriers, biases, and supports associated with women's leadership; how demographics (i.e., age, race, ethnicity) affect leadership; and the development needs of leaders working globally across cultures.

The next section of this paper introduces 23 models. This is not an exhaustive list of frameworks used to accomplish our mission. Instead, these are commonly used models in our work today.

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CCL Leadership Models

3 TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP CULTURES

Leadership culture refers to the meaning that people generate and the tools they have to create leadership throughout the organization (McGuire, Palus, Pasmore & Rhodes, 2015). To develop leadership cultures to support learning, growth, and change, we developed a leadership culture model to illustrate 3 states and stages of culture. We use this model in our organizational leadership work.

Nicknamed "The Snowman," the model labels organizational cultures as dependent, independent, and interdependent. These cultures can be understood in variations, combinations, and progressions (McGuire & Palus, 2018). Each is more capable than the one before to respond to and manage complexity, accelerated change, and the capabilities needed to support new strategies. Organizations often have a mix of the 3 kinds of cultures.

Starting at the left of the model, *dependent* leadership cultures hold people in formal positions of authority responsible for leadership. Success depends on obedience, loyalty, hierarchy, and keeping things running efficiently. *Independent* leadership cultures assume leadership will emerge as needed from a variety of knowledgeable and expert individuals. In independent leadership cultures, authority, control, decision-making, and responsibility are distributed among experts. *Interdependent* leadership cultures view leadership as a collective activity that requires mutual inquiry, learning, and a capacity to work with complex challenges. These cultures collaborate to build organizations that thrive in a changing world. Learning from mistakes and both positive and negative feedback are tools for the success of interdependent leadership cultures.

To cite:

McGuire, J. B., Palus, C. J., Pasmore, W. & Rhodes, G. B. (2015). *Transforming your organization* [White paper]. Center for Creative Leadership. https://doi.org/10.35613/ccl.2015.1026

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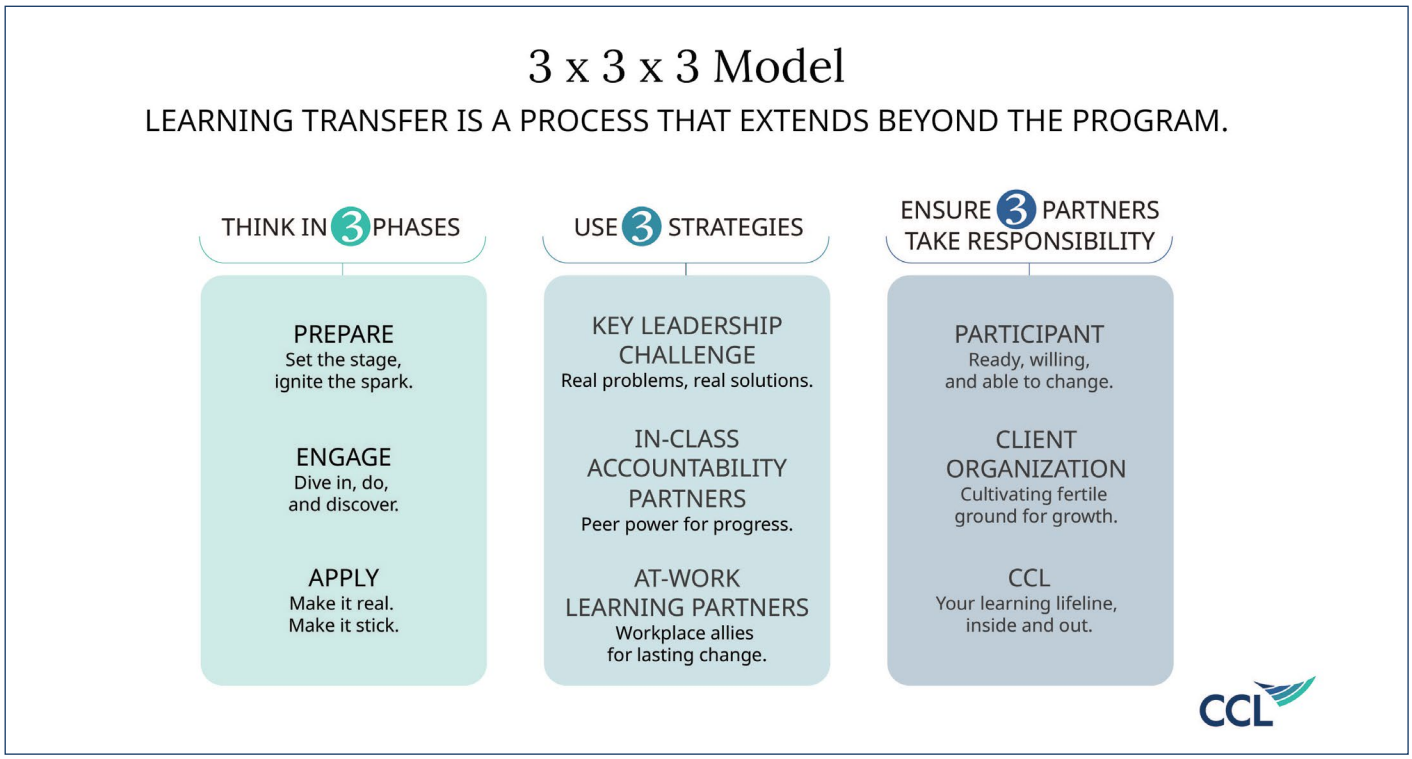

3x3x3 MODEL

The question, "Are things being taught in the classroom being applied in the workplace?" is frequently discussed among leadership development sponsors and providers (McCauley & Van Velsor, 2004). This question frames the concept of "transfer of learning" — that is, the effective and continuing application of knowledge, skills, and perspectives gained in learning activities by learners to their jobs (Phillips & Broad, 1997). To address this challenge head-on, we pioneered the comprehensive **3x3x3 Model**. This approach, rooted in extensive research and refined through practical application, outlines the key elements for effective learning transfer across 3 dimensions: 3 phases, 3 strategies, and 3 partners (Reinhold, Patterson & Hegel, 2015). The elements of this model can be applied to development programs or initiatives within any organization.

The first column on the left presents 3 phases of the learning transfer process. The *prepare* phase focuses on "setting the stage and igniting the spark" for the learning experience. The *engage* phase encourages participants to "dive in, do, and discover." In the final *apply* phase, learners work to "make it real, make it stick," putting their learning into practice.

The middle column — *strategies* — focuses on 3 ways to maximize the opportunity for learning transfer. They include (1) having a key leadership challenge that focuses on "real problems, real solutions," (2) establishing in-class accountability partners that leverage "peer power for progress," and (3) connecting with at-work learning partners who serve as "workplace allies for lasting change."

The right column of the 3x3x3 model lists the groups responsible for the learning transfer. These include the participant, who must be "ready, willing, and able to change" the client organization, which is responsible for "cultivating fertile ground for growth," and CCL, which serves as "your learning lifeline, inside and out."

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Our model recognizes that successful learning transfer is a collaborative effort. We work closely with both the learner's organization and the individual to ensure that new knowledge and skills take root and flourish in the workplace.

The 3x3x3 model isn't just theoretical — it's the result of our ongoing commitment to blending research with practical expertise. We've conducted extensive literature reviews on learning transfer and tapped into the wisdom of our own leadership development experts to create a truly comprehensive approach.

We use the prepare – engage – apply framework in all of our designs and delivery methods. It's our way of addressing barriers to learning transfer at each stage of the leadership development journey (pre-classroom, in-classroom, and post-classroom). When we share this model with clients and potential partners, it underscores our view that actual leadership growth is an ongoing process, with classroom learning as just one piece of a much larger puzzle.

To cite:
Reinhold, D., Patterson, T. & Hegel, P. (2015). *Make learning stick: Best practices to get the most out of leadership development.* Center for Creative Leadership. https://cclinnovation.org/make-learning-stick-best-practices-to-get-the-most-out-of-leadership-development/

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4 CORE BEHAVIORS FOR BETTER CONVERSATIONS EVERY DAY

In our ongoing quest to transform leadership effectiveness, we've developed the **4 Core Behaviors For Better Conversations Every Day** model. We've identified 4 core skills that, when mastered, build trust, fuel collaboration, and drive better business outcomes (Been & Ainsworth, 2019). Let's explore how we're helping leaders create immediate, tangible results:

1. *Listening to Understand:* We're teaching leaders to embrace genuine curiosity and full attention. We challenge them to avoid premature judgments and manage distractions, even in the most challenging environments. It's not just about hearing words — it's about truly comprehending the speaker's message and intent.

2. *Asking Powerful Questions:* We're equipping leaders with the ability to craft questions that spark self-reflection and discovery. Our approach moves beyond simple information gathering to provoke deeper thinking. We guide leaders to use open-ended, non-leading questions that trigger insightful "how," "what," and "tell me more" responses.

3. *Challenging and Supporting:* We're assisting leaders to help others break free from limited thinking. By asking thought-provoking questions, we show leaders how to guide their teams to discover new possibilities and push beyond perceived constraints.

4. *Establishing Next Steps & Accountability:* We're helping leaders turn conversations into action. We focus on committing to tangible steps and following through. Our approach emphasizes concentrating on what can be controlled or influenced, and we're showing the power of accountability partnerships in dramatically increasing follow-through.

Together, these 4 act as intertwined laces woven into the fabric of communication. They form the foundation of our groundbreaking program, Better Conversations Every Day™. Through this program, we're not just improving communication — we're transforming how leaders interact, influence, and drive results.

To cite:

Been, R. & Ainsworth, C. (2019). *Better culture starts with better conversations: How more effective conversations can transform your organization.* Center for Creative Leadership [White paper]. https://www.ccl.org/articles/white-papers/better-culture-starts-with-better-conversations/

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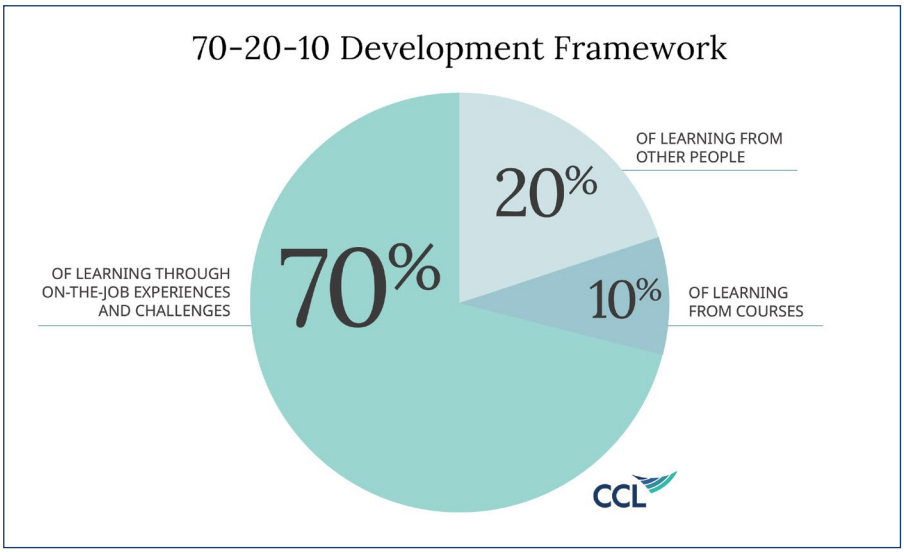
70-20-10 DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

We at CCL have long recognized that leadership development extends beyond the classroom. The groundbreaking **70-20-10 Development Framework**, born from our "Lessons of Experience" (LOE) research, captures this insight by identifying 3 key types of blended learning developmental activities: challenging assignments (70%), developmental relationships (20%), and coursework and training (10%).



This framework serves 2 crucial purposes: (1) it emphasizes that formal courses aren't the sole or even primary driver of executive development, and (2) it encourages organizations and leadership development professionals to intentionally leverage other people and job experiences in developing managers.

Our LOE investigations are built on a fundamental assumption: managers develop over their careers, driven by significant experiences. We've replicated this study 7 times, each time asking leaders to reflect on critical career moments and the lessons they learned. The central questions posed were: What happened? What did you learn from it (for better or worse)?

In our seminal Key Events study, we conducted in-depth interviews with 79 successful executives from 3 Fortune 100 corporations (Lindsey, Homes & McCall, 1987). The results revealed a diverse array of experiences that teach significant lessons. *Challenging assignments* include scope changes, "fix-its" or turnarounds, start-ups, transitions from line to staff roles, leading projects / task forces, and breaking out of career ruts. *Learning from others* encompasses interactions with role models, mentors, and peers. Finally, *coursework and training* represent formal instruction and educational events.

The catchy 70-20-10 phrase was coined by Robert Eichinger and Michael Lombardo, summarizing their findings from our original LOE research (see Lombardo & Eichinger, 1996). Mike Lombardo, a former CCL staff member, led the initial LOE study, while Bob Eichinger, a former adjunct staff member, headed HR for one of the participating Fortune 100 companies. Although they may have started using the 70-20-10 language in a CCL program for HR executives, their codification and popularization of the framework happened after they left CCL and started their own company.

It's important to note that our framework isn't a rigid guideline for designing leadership development programs. Rather, it illuminates the major categories of developmental experiences throughout executives' careers. Each learning modality offers unique and vital contributions to leadership growth.

To cite[1]:

Lombardo, M. M. & Eichinger, R. W. (1996) *Career architect development planner*. Korn Ferry.

1 Citation optional, given that 70-20-10 has become a common catchphrase in the leadership development vocabulary. In fact, some dispute Lombardo & Eichinger as its only source (for example, see Smith, 2015).

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ADVANCED STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

The outer rim of the **Advanced Strategic Leadership** model identifies the components of strategy formulation and execution. The graphic model is circular, with continuous arrows emphasizing that organizations will move around the model as they form, implement, reassess, and revise the strategy (Hughes, Beatty & Dinwoodie, 2014). Users of the model are encouraged to think of it as an iterative, ongoing, learning process, as no strategy ever stays the same. We use this model in our organizational leadership work.

The 6 components of this model make up the organizational strategic process. *Internal & external environment* begins with an analysis of the internal and external "factors" impinging on the organization. Factors many include economic, technological, governmental, environmental, and social influences. *Vision, mission & values* represent the aspirational components of the strategy that help people understand why the organization exists and the beliefs that drive the people in the organization. Next, *key strategic drivers* are the determinants of sustainable competitive value. *Business strategy* is the pattern of choices an organization makes to position itself for success. *Leadership strategy* addresses the human side of business strategy, including capabilities, emotions, needs, and beliefs. Finally, *execute & learn* involve translating intent into action by identifying and implementing tactics consistent with the strategies.

In the center of the model are 3 strategic leadership capabilities indicative of systems thinking: *think* (ability to prioritize and manage paradox), *act* (taking decisive and timely actions), and *influence* (engendering commitment to change with others inside and outside of the organization). Thinking, acting, and influencing are strategic leadership functions that help people gain agreement with the direction, alignment, and commitment to the strategy (Dinwoodie, 2011).

Data used to refine the model were collected from 830 leaders attending our Leading Strategically program between 2008 and 2013. Leaders were asked to complete a pre-program survey on their top strategic leadership challenges. The sample consisted of 82% men; had a mean age of 48 (youngest 30 and oldest 67); and included 4% upper-middle managers, 86% executives or top managers, and 10% other. The leaders were from private, public, and non-profit sectors.

To cite:

Hughes, R. L., Beatty, K. C. & Dinwoodie, D. L. (2013). *Becoming a strategic leader: Your role in your organization's enduring success.* John Wiley & Sons.

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ASSESSMENT – CHALLENGE – SUPPORT (ACS)™

ACS™ is a powerful framework that identifies 3 critical elements driving leadership development both in and out of the classroom. The Venn diagram places "results" in the intersection of overlapping elements, emphasizing how they work together to create lasting impact. To achieve *results* we encourage leaders to assess their situation and their skills, seek developmentally appropriate challenges, and create the necessary support to meet those challenges.

Let's break down each element:

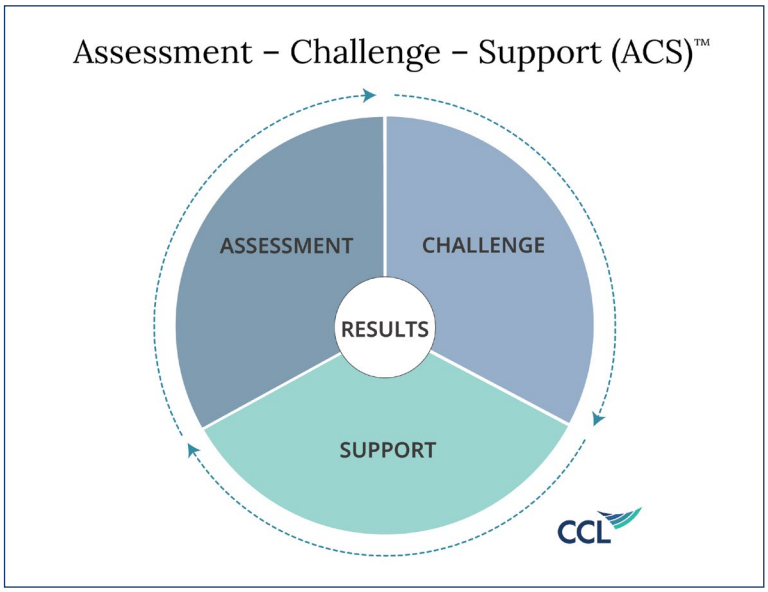
Assessment refers to information that identifies learners' current strengths, development needs, and their overall level of effectiveness (Browning & Van Velsor, 1999). Assessments may include personality inventories, 360-degree leadership assessments, and both formal and informal feedback from program staff and fellow participants. These types of assessments help learners understand how they are perceived by others in the workplace.

Challenge refers to new experiences requiring new skills and perspectives or elements that create imbalance for the leader and provide an opportunity to question established ways of thinking and acting.

Support represents elements of an experience that enhance self-confidence and provide reassurance about one's strengths, current skills, and established ways of thinking and acting.

We've carefully balanced these elements in our model to ensure we're not under- or over-challenging learners, overwhelming them with feedback, or failing to provide the support they need to achieve their goals.

The ACS model first appeared in the *CCL Handbook of Leadership Development*, summarizing our perspective on effective



leadership development. As noted by the *Handbook* editors, the ACS model summarized a perspective that was emerging at CCL: "Through the Center's research and educational programs, we have begun to better understand the elements that are key drivers of leadership development (assessment, challenge, and support). When we look at any type of developmental experience — from training programs to job assignments — we find that they are most effective when all three elements are present" (Van Velsor, McCauley & Moxley, 1998, p. 8).

The model was informed by a series of in-depth evaluations of CCL programs conducted in the 1980s and in the 1990s. These studies identified key design elements — such as feedback, coaching support, and learning projects — that contributed most significantly to changes in leaders' behaviors and perspectives (Van Velsor & Musselwhite, 1986; Van Velsor, Ruderman & Phillips, 1989; McCauley & Hughes-James, 1994; Young & Dixon, 1996). We also drew insights from our pioneering "Lessons of Experience" research, highlighting the crucial role of challenging experiences in leadership development.

To cite:
McCauley, C. D., Moxley, R. S. & Van Velsor, E. (1998). Introduction. In McCauley, C. D., Moxley, R. S. & Van Velsor, E. (Eds.). *The Center for Creative Leadership handbook of leadership development* (pp. 1–25). John Wiley & Sons.

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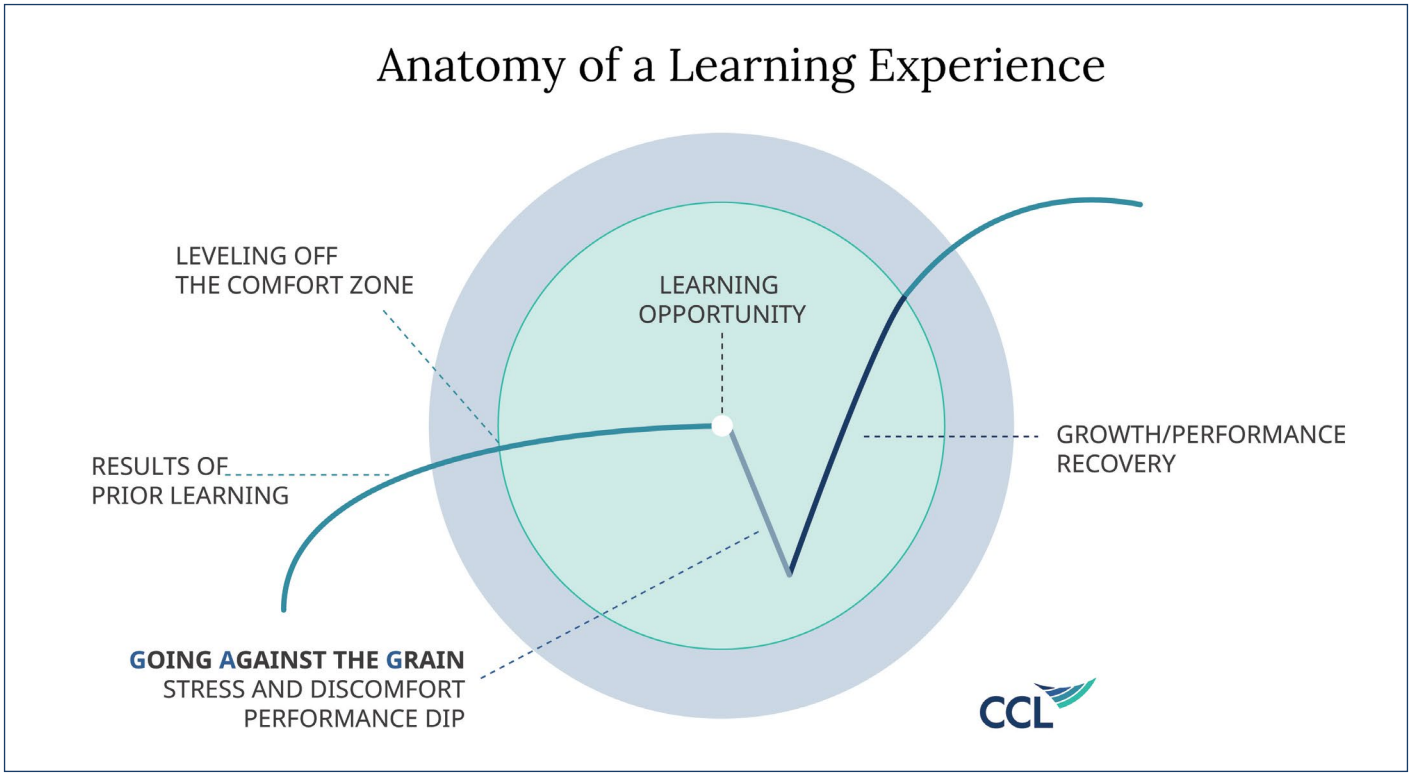
ANATOMY OF A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

We've developed an illuminating model that challenges the notion of linear learning trajectories. Our **Anatomy of a Learning Experience** model vividly illustrates the complex, often challenging journey of leadership development. We recognize that true growth often means stepping out of your comfort zone. When leaders embark on learning something new, they may experience stress and temporary dips in performance. We call this crucial process "going against the grain" — it's the moment when leaders push past the familiar to embrace new skills and perspectives (Bunker & Webb, 1992).



Our model consists of several key components. The circular element represents a stressful learning event, while the left side of the curve showcases prior growth and development. We highlight a "plateau" where existing skills no longer suffice, signaling the need for new competencies. The smaller concentric circle symbolizes the tension created by challenging learning experiences. As leaders navigate this process, we predict a significant performance increase with newly acquired skills.

The circular part of the model represents a stressful learning event. The left side of the curve reflects the growth and development from prior learning experiences. It also represents a flattening out of the value of achieved skills when the need for new skills emerges. At this phase, the model suggests that learners must exit their comfort zone and overcome possible fear of both successful and unsuccessful change. The smaller concentric circle represents tension created by challenging learning experiences. As learners go through this process, the model predicts performance increases at a higher level with new skills.

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This model is grounded in 5 years of our LOE research, an extensive review of the stress literature, and a targeted study on executives' coping mechanisms during learning (Bunker & Webb, 1992). We use this model to empower our clients and leaders to facilitate learning transfer.

We've learned that learning is a journey, not a destination. When leaders return from our programs and apply new skills, they might experience a temporary performance dip. Organizations play a crucial role in supporting this process, and we advocate for creating environments that encourage learning, practice, and risk-taking. Leaders should actively seek ongoing feedback to refine their newly acquired skills.

By embracing this model, we're revolutionizing how organizations approach leadership development. We're not just preparing leaders for today's challenges — we're equipping them with the resilience and adaptability to thrive in tomorrow's uncertain landscape.

To cite:

Bunker, K. A. & Webb, A. D. (1992). *Learning how to learn from experience: Impact of stress and coping* (Technical Report No. 154). Center for Creative Leadership. https://doi.org/10.35613/ccl.1992.2000

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BEYOND BIAS™

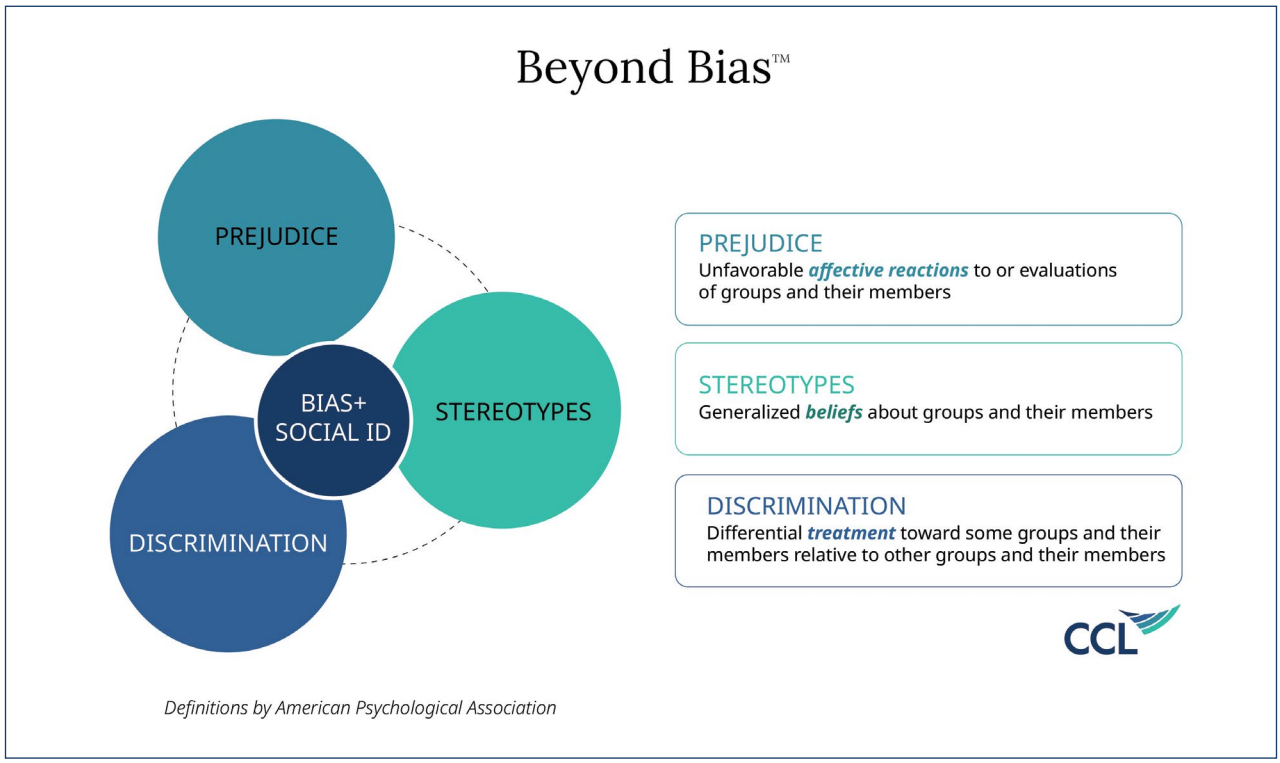
The **Beyond Bias™** model forms the cornerstone of our innovative Beyond Bias program and our equity, diversity, and inclusion practice. This model helps leaders gain critical insight into (1) the nature of bias and its workplace impact, (2) personal biases and those of others, (3) social identities and their relationship to bias, and (4) effective strategies for managing and overcoming bias.

Our model visually demonstrates how bias — an intentional or unintentional preference for or against a specific group or individuals — manifests as stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination (Clerkin, 2020). We've drawn on definitions from the American Psychological Association to elucidate these concepts. *Stereotypes* are generalized beliefs about groups of people and their members. *Prejudice* refers to unfavorable affective reactions to groups of people and their members, and *discrimination* is the differential treatment of select groups.

We recognize that bias targeting specific identities or groups can be particularly damaging in the workplace. That's why we've placed bias and social identity at the heart of our model. The outer ring reflects stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. Stereotyping represents oversimplified beliefs about groups, prejudice encompasses negative attitudes and emotions toward others, and discrimination manifests as unfair actions based on these beliefs and attitudes.

Importantly, our model doesn't include connecting arrows between these outcomes. This design choice reflects our understanding that while these elements reinforce each other, there's no predetermined causal order.

To cite:
Clerkin, C. (2020). *Beyond bias: Move from awareness to action.* Center for Creative Leadership.



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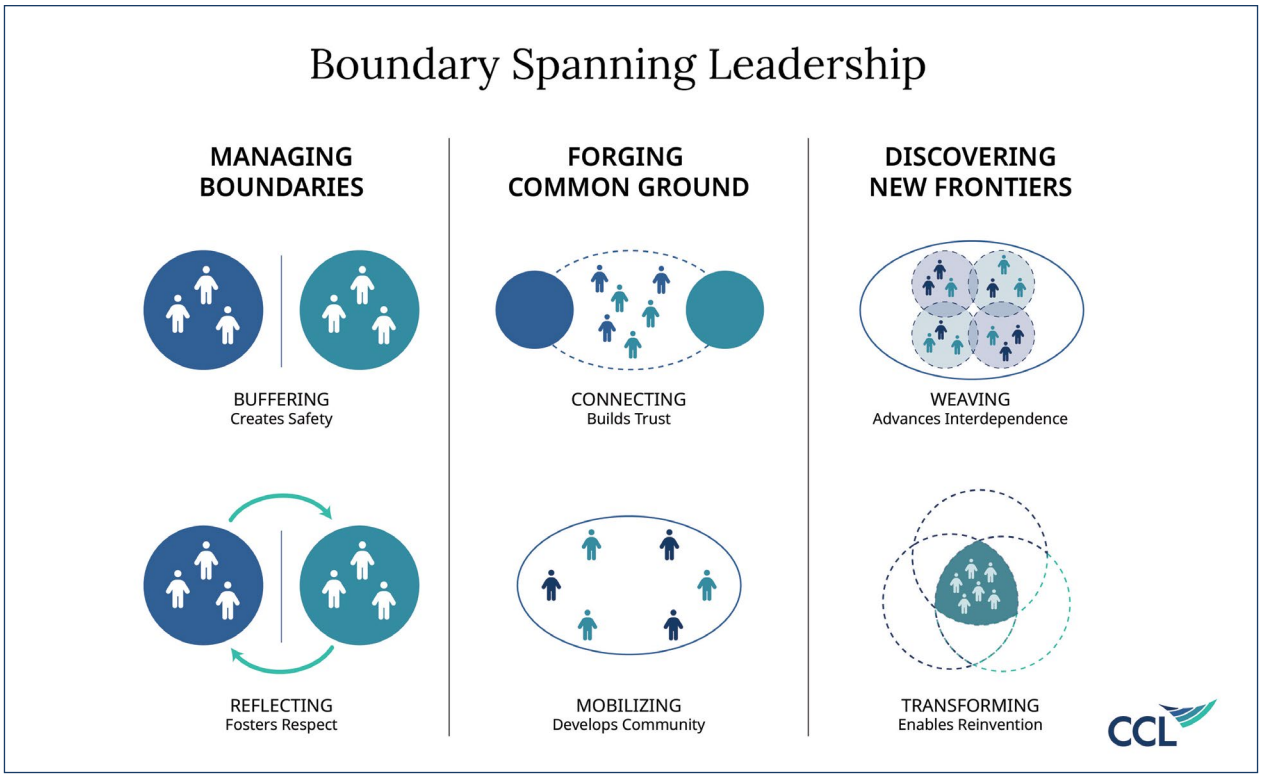
BOUNDARY SPANNING LEADERSHIP

Boundary spanning leadership strategies were born from our ambitious "Leadership Across Differences" research project. This 4-phase project, conducted across 6 world regions between 2001 and 2008, yielded a rich database of 2,800 survey responses, 289 interviews, and diverse media and organizational communications (Ernst & Chrobot-Mason, 2011). Our model presents 5 boundaries of leadership: (1) vertical — leading across levels, authority, and power; (2) horizontal — leading across functions, peers, and expertise; (3) stakeholder — leading internal and external partners, customers, communities, and governing bodies; (4) demographic — leading amid human diversity including gender, race, ethnicity, education, and ideology; and (5) geographic — leading across culture, regions, markets, and locations.



We created the model with 3 interrelated strategies to help leaders welcome, accept, and coordinate people of diverse perspectives by managing boundaries, forging common ground, and discovering new frontiers. We use this model in our organizational leadership work.

Starting with the left side of the model, *managing boundaries* suggests practices that create or strengthen boundaries supporting the human need for differentiation and uniqueness. The 2 practices support this strategy are *buffering* and *reflecting*. As seen in the graphic representation of *buffering*, a line between 2 groups (shown as one blue and one teal circle) represents the boundary that needs to be defined. The leader can help buffer groups by (1) clarifying their roles, responsibilities, values, goals, and perspectives, and (2) protecting groups from external forces and competing demands. Intergroup safety is the predicted outcome of this buffering. *Reflecting* is the practice of sharing individual identity

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differences while keeping the group identity intact. The graphic shows a boundary between groups with arrows indicating mutual sharing. Respect is the predicted outcome of the practice of reflecting.

Forging common ground, the middle section of the model, uses practices that move attention away from differences to group commonalities. Here, the actions of *connecting* and *mobilizing* are graphically depicted as moving from outside one's group into a central group. The role of the leader in the *connecting* phase is to bridge divided groups by creating networks of trust-based relationships. The role of the *mobilizing* leader is to identify a common purpose and shared identity across groups by creating shared goals, developing an inclusive culture, and identifying shared values.

The 3rd component of the model, *discovering new frontiers*, contains the practices of *weaving* and *transforming*, which focus on new possibilities and innovation. *Weaving* is illustrated by overlapping circles representing commonality and distinction. The leader's role in weaving (interlace boundaries and foster interdependence) is to remove barriers, leverage differences, and link shared expertise. In the practice of *transforming*, a 3rd group with a unique identity is formed, as displayed in the graphic. Transforming leaders, as depicted in the model, draws multiple groups together to reinvent themselves by focusing on the future.

To cite:

Ernst, C. & Chrobot-Mason, D. (2011). *Boundary spanning leadership: Six practices for solving problems, driving innovation, and transforming organizations*. McGraw-Hill.

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CHANGE LEADERSHIP / CHANGE MANAGEMENT

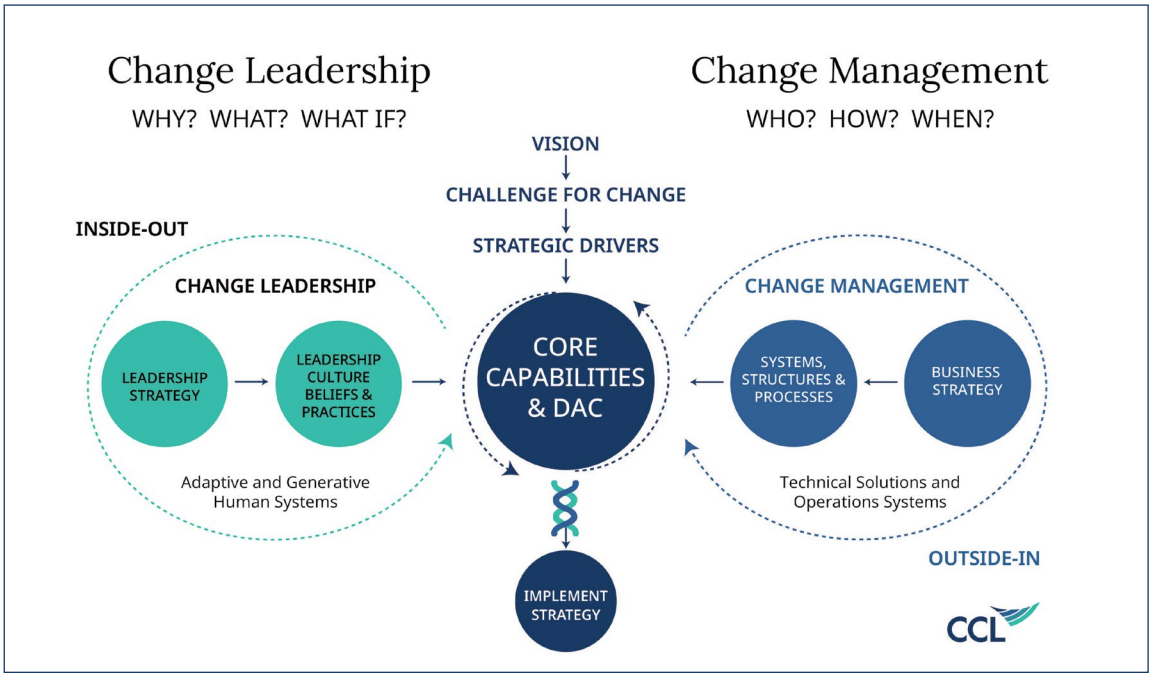
The Change Leadership / Change Management framework, also known as the **Organizational Leadership Transformation** framework, is a synthesis of action research with clients, CCL's Strategic Leadership model, the Direction – Alignment – Commitment (DAC)™ Framework, our Leadership Culture Model, and John Kotter's (Kotter, 1995) Change Management model. We use this model in our organizational leadership work.

The framework visually starts with a *vision* of the strategy to be implemented. The *challenge* symbolizes the organization's need to create and / or address leadership cultures (beliefs and practices) that will support a new direction, not undermine it. *Strategic drivers* reflect the determinants of the organization's sustainable competitive value. *Core capabilities* include paying attention, personalizing, imaging, serious play, collaborative inquiry, and crafting to create DAC (Palus & Horth, 2002).

To *implement* a strategy that requires people to change the way they do things, the model recommends leaders work beyond the operational plan or operational systems and learn how to change the culture or human systems (McGuire, Rhodes & Palus, 2008). The framework posits that successful change requires the understanding, development, alignment, and execution of both change leadership *and* change management. *Change leadership* includes leadership mindsets, behaviors, and capabilities required to enact the business strategy (reflected in the graphic as *inside-out*). *Change management* includes the external systems, structures, and processes that are needed to support the business strategy (reflected in the graphic as *outside-in*).

The combined approach, reflected in the model, often leads leaders to questions whose answers help to facilitate learning and change. The questions include: "Why will we change?", "What will we change?", "What if we did it this way or that way?", "Who will change?", "How will we change?" and "When will we change"?

To cite:
McGuire, J. B. (2003, October). *Leadership strategies for culture change: Developing change leadership as an organizational core capacity.* Paper presented at the Center for Creative Leadership – Friends of the Center Leadership Conference, Orlando, FL. https://doi.org/10.35613/ccl.2003.2009



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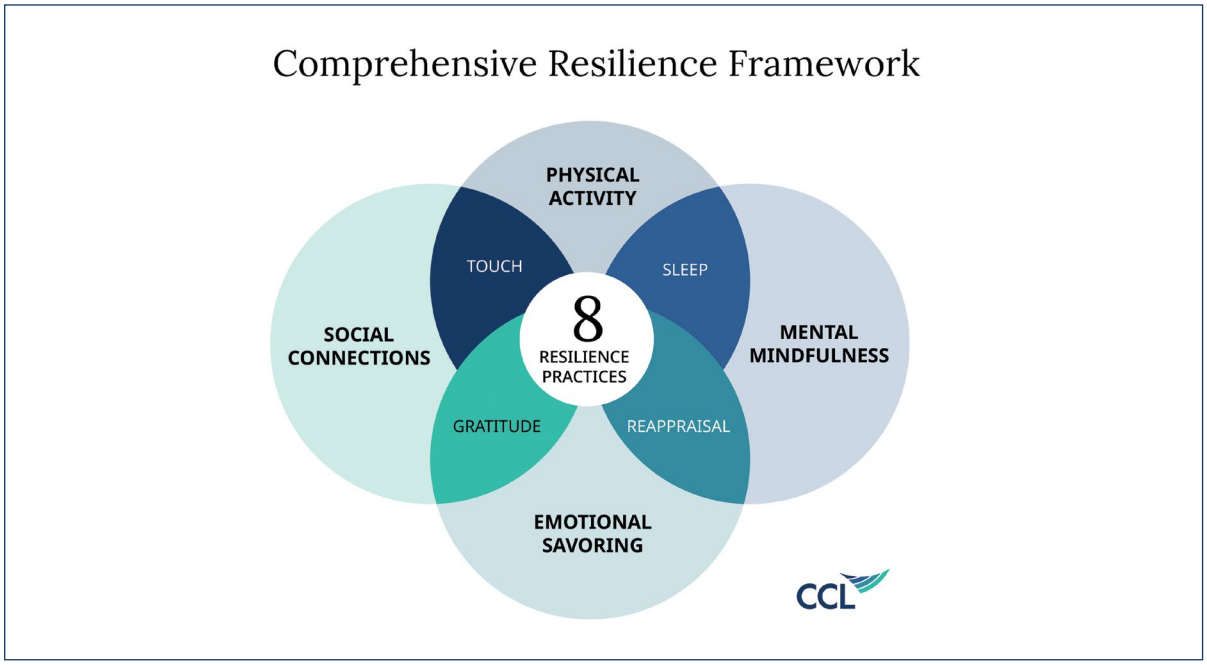
COMPREHENSIVE RESILIENCE FRAMEWORK

We developed the **Comprehensive Resilience Framework** for cultivating resilience in leaders. Our research-driven approach focuses on 4 interconnected *aspects* of resilience: physical, mental, emotional, and social. We've identified 8 evidence-based *practices* that form the model's foundation: physical activity, sleep optimization, mindfulness, cognitive reappraisal, savoring experiences, gratitude, social connection, and meaningful social contact.



Our dynamic resilience framework is designed for continuous evolution. We've intentionally separated the 4 overarching areas of resilience from the specific practices, allowing us to incorporate new resilience-building exercises as our research and practical insights grow. We represent the aspects of resilience as overlapping circles, reflecting their interwoven and mutually reinforcing nature. At the heart of our framework lies resilience itself, serving as a constant reminder that each area of focus strengthens and reinforces overall resilience.

Our Comprehensive Resilience Framework is the result of an extensive review of resilience and wellbeing literature, spanning several decades of psychology research across various domains (Fernandez, Clerkin & Ruderman, 2020). Resilience, or responding adaptively to challenges that range from chronic everyday experiences to major disruptions or adversities, has been found to be positively associated with leadership effectiveness (Folkman, 2017), performance (Luthans et al., 2005), job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Goh, Pfeffer & Zenios, 2015).

By integrating the resilience framework into leadership development programs, we're equipping leaders with the tools they need to thrive in today's dynamic business environment.

To cite:

Fernandez, K., Clerkin, C. & Ruderman, M. (2020). *Building leadership resilience: The CORE framework.* Center for Creative Leadership. https://doi.org/10.35613/ccl.2020.2043

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COMPETENCIES OF LEADERSHIP

At CCL, we continually refine and advance our understanding of leadership development. Our 2016 Leader Development Roadmap was an essential step in this ongoing process, leading us to identify what we call the **Competencies of Leadership.**

We created this roadmap to help our clients find the right CCL program for their needs. Organizing our offerings around leader levels helps us align with the language our clients often use when discussing leader development.

To develop this framework, we mapped our 360-degree competency library to different leader levels. We sought input from researchers, thought leaders, and practitioners to validate our approach. We also gathered data through our "Ideas into Action" research initiative, collecting insights from our classroom participants. Confirmation of the mapping involved interviews with researchers, thought leaders, and practitioners.

Through this process, we found that 4 competencies consistently emerged as necessary for leaders across various career stages, organizational levels, and sectors. We refer to these as the Fundamental 4:

1. *Self-awareness* characterizes leaders' understanding of their identity.
2. *Learning agility* is the capacity to absorb new information, process it, and use it to meet new challenges quickly and decisively.
3. *Influence* is the power to persuade others to act on that vision.
4. *Communication* describes the ability to establish shared understanding with others and convey a vision for addressing challenges.

These Fundamental 4 components form an important part of our programs, including our Lead 4 Success® offering. We believe they provide a helpful foundation for leadership development, though we continually seek to refine and improve our approach based on new research and feedback from our clients.

To cite:
Hallenbeck, G. (2016). *Lead 4 success.* Center for Creative Leadership.

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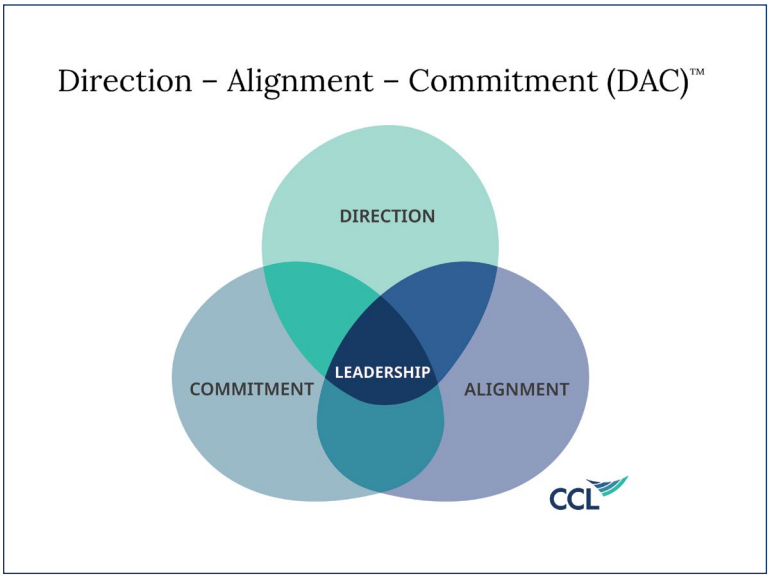
DIRECTION – ALIGNMENT – COMMITMENT (DAC)™

At CCL, we've been at the forefront of leadership development for decades. Our groundbreaking **DAC** framework represents a paradigm shift in understanding, measuring, and developing leadership.

We developed this innovative approach over several years, challenging traditional leadership theories that focused solely on leaders influencing followers. Instead, we asked a more profound question: "What does it take for individuals to willingly and effectively combine their efforts to produce collective results?"

Our research and experience pointed to 3 key ingredients: a shared direction, alignment of work, and commitment to the collective. This framework, first published in The Leadership Quarterly in 2008, promotes a relational view of leadership, moving beyond command-and-control to mutual influence. DAC is not just a theory — it's our official perspective on leadership, and it's transforming organizations worldwide.



The framework is grounded in the view that leadership is a social process that produces direction, alignment, and commitment among people with shared work. With leadership at the center of the model, the framework presents leadership in terms of group outcomes: (1) *direction*, agreement on the overall goals, aims, and mission; (2) *alignment*, coordinated knowledge and work; and (3) *commitment*, mutual responsibility.

The impact of DAC has been remarkable. Model developers and proponents Cynthia (Cindy) McCauley and Charles (Chuck) Palus conducted a case study on adopting and applying the DAC framework. In a 2019 survey of 124 client-facing staff, 89% agreed that the DAC framework was the right framework for our leadership development work, 94% confirmed its effectiveness across different organizations, and 74% attested to its success across various global cultures. Several of those surveyed gave examples of client organizations that have adopted DAC for their leadership development, a testament to its universal applicability and effectiveness.

We've successfully applied DAC across diverse settings — from classrooms to boardrooms, from small teams to large communities, and in academic research. It's not just about developing individual leaders; it's about cultivating leadership cultures that drive organizational success.

To cite:

Drath, W. H., McCauley, C. D., Palus, C. J., Van Velsor, E., O'Connor, P. M. & McGuire, J. B. (2008). Direction, alignment, commitment: Toward a more integrative ontology of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly,* 19(6), 635-653. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2008.09.003

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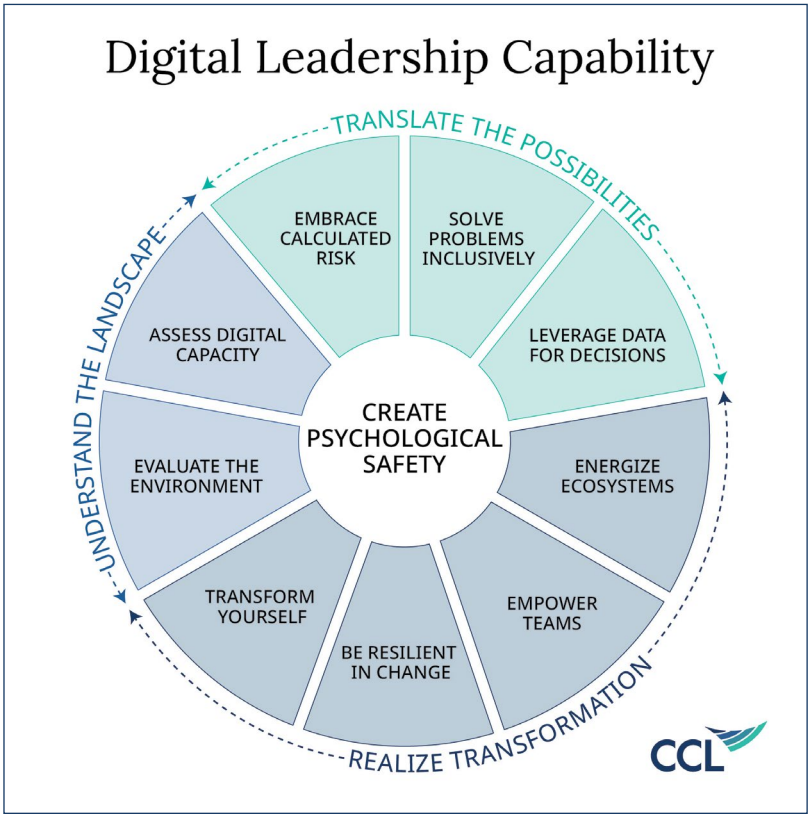
DIGITAL LEADERSHIP CAPABILITY

Our **Digital Leadership Capability** model identifies 9 people-related leadership capabilities. The model is organized into 3 cycles of digital transformation: (1) understanding the landscape, (2) translating possibilities, and (3) realizing transformation. We use this model in our digital transformation work.



The 1st cycle, *understand the landscape*, emphasizes exploration of the organization's digital capacity and capabilities by engaging stakeholders, partners, networks, and teams. We recommend 2 leadership capabilities: *evaluate the environment* — skilled at assessing readiness, and *assess digital capacity* — the ability to evaluate the organization's digital strengths and weaknesses.

The 2nd cycle of the model, *translate the possibilities*, examines competing priorities and understanding opposing viewpoints with the goal of arriving at a decision. This cycle includes 3 leadership capabilities: *embrace calculated risk* — demonstrating risk tolerance and a calculated approach to adopting new methods; *solve problems inclusively* — the ability to adopt innovative, flexible, and inclusive approaches to problem solving; and *leverage data for decisions* — skilled at incorporating data and metrics into decision-making.

The 3rd cycle, *realize transformation*, culminates action by internal and external partners. To realize transformation, 4 leadership capabilities are noted in the model: *energize ecosystems* — exciting and galvanizing others, inside and outside the organization, around the possibilities that technologies may bring; *empower teams* — acting as an encouraging and enabling team leader; *be resilient in change* — the ability to adapt well in the face of transition and stress; and finally, *transform yourself* — the ability to practice learning agility and adopt an open mindset.

In the center of the graphic circular model is the goal: *psychological safety* — a shared belief by the team that the team is safe for risk-taking. This model suggests that psychological safety allows team members to voice and address complexities.

To cite:

Flink, C., Gross, L. & Pasmore, W. (2023). *Doing well and doing good: Human-centered digital transformation leadership.* World Scientific.

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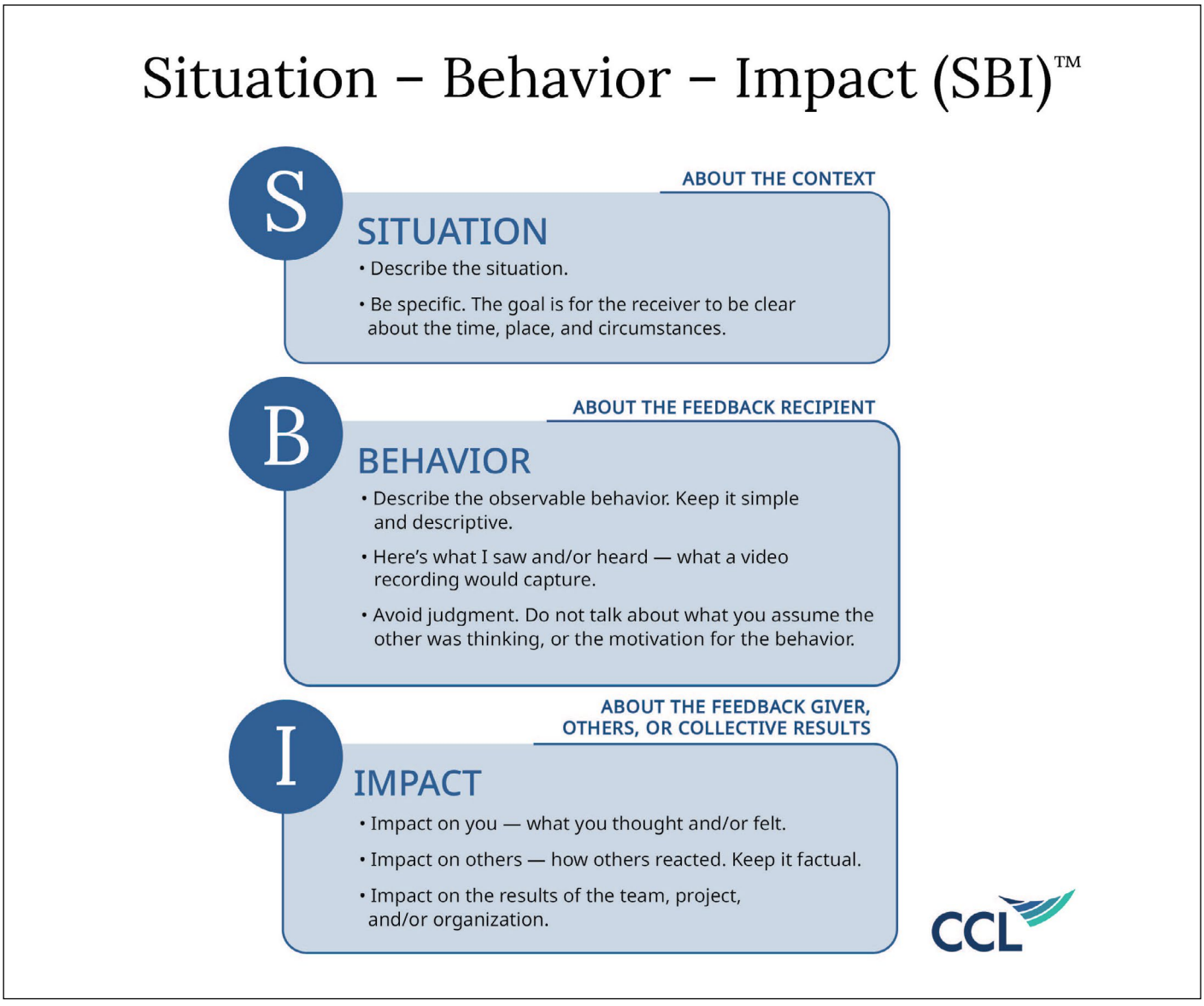
SITUATION – BEHAVIOR – IMPACT (SBI)™

At CCL, we've long recognized that while many leaders understand the importance of feedback, they often struggle with how to effectively give and receive it. We've observed that numerous professionals shy away from challenging conversations due to fear and anxiety. That's why we pioneered the **Situation – Behavior – Impact (SBI)™** model — a seminal approach to giving feedback that we've been practicing and teaching for decades.



Our SBI model offers a clear, step-by-step approach:

1. *Situation* — Clearly describe the specific context in which the behavior occurred.
2. *Behavior* — Describe the observed actions or conduct exhibited in that situation.
3. *Impact* — Communicate how the person's behavior affected you.

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We've integrated the SBI model into our feedback-intensive programs, where leaders can learn and practice this transformative technique. Our SBI module is designed to (1) equip leaders with a skill that can drive immediate growth, during our programs and back in their workplaces; (2) foster peer-to-peer learning in a supportive classroom environment; and (3) reduce the discomfort often associated when learning a new skill.

The roots of SBI trace back to the 1970s and the visionary work of Robert Dorn, the founder of our pioneering Leadership Development Program (LDP)®. As our Director of Leadership Development, Dorn realized his vision of providing assessment center–type data to program participants in a supportive, developmental setting (Guthrie & Kelly-Radford, 1998). This approach laid the foundation for many of our feedback-intensive programs that continue to evolve today.

In 2000, we published our first formal piece on SBI, cementing its place in leadership development literature. As we noted then, "Through years of giving feedback to tens of thousands of people, we've developed the SBI technique" (Weitzel, 2000, p. 12).

By teaching and promoting SBI, we're not just imparting a skill — we're transforming how leaders communicate, grow, and drive positive change in their organizations. It's just one example of how we're constantly pushing the boundaries of leadership development to meet the evolving needs of leaders worldwide.

To cite[2]:
Weitzel, S. R. (2000). *Feedback that works: How to build and deliver your message.* Center for Creative Leadership.

2 Note 2nd Edition: Center for Creative Leadership (2019). *Feedback that works: How to build and deliver your message, Second Edition.* Center for Creative Leadership.

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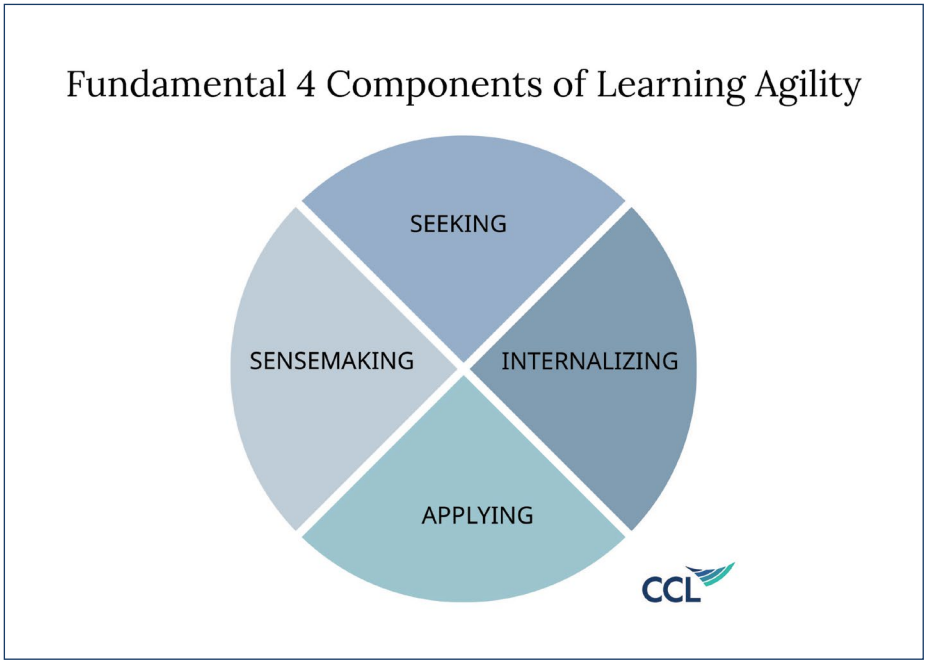
FUNDAMENTAL 4 COMPONENTS OF LEARNING AGILITY

Our pioneering research on LOE and openness to learning (McCall et al., 1996) led us to create the **Fundamental 4 Components of Learning Agility** model. This model comprises 4 behaviors we believe to occur sequentially in the learning process (Hallenbeck, 2016).

We've identified these crucial learning agility behaviors: seeking, sensemaking, internalizing, and applying. *Seeking* behavior reflects leaders' willingness to engage in new experiences and tackle challenging situations. *Sensemaking* asks leaders to be open and curious to new perspectives by asking "why," "how," and "why not" questions. *Internalizing* behaviors involve actively seeking feedback and reflecting on what is being learned. Finally, *applying* entails using principles and knowledge from past experiences to navigate new and challenging situations effectively.



By emphasizing these behaviors, we're equipping leaders with the tools they need to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing leadership landscape.

To cite:
Hallenbeck, George (2016). *Learning agility: Unlock the lessons of experience.* Center for Creative Leadership.

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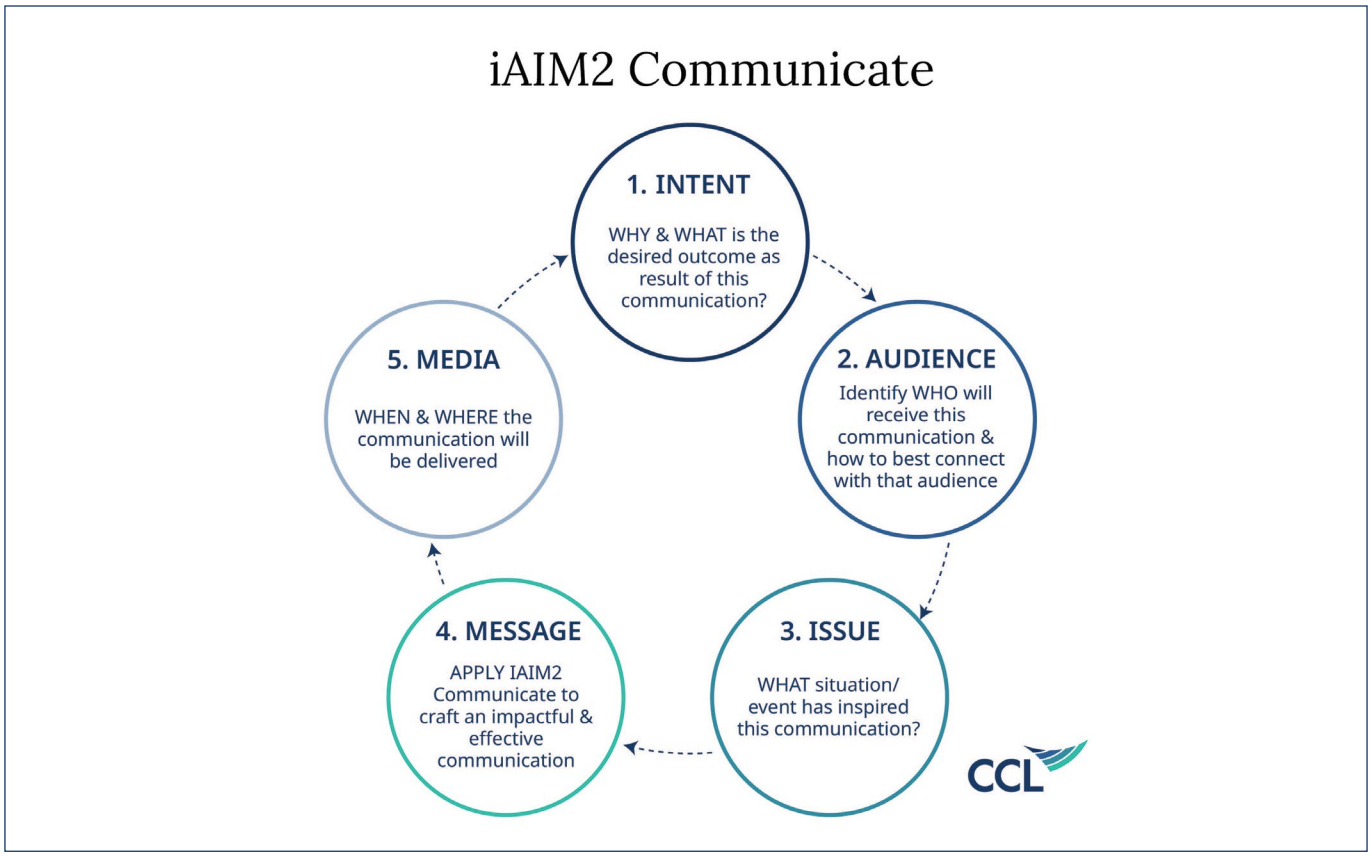
iAIM2 COMMUNICATE

We understand that confident communication is a desirable skill for all leaders. That's why we developed the **iAIM2 Communicate** model, a 5-step process that's transforming how leaders frame their messages and connect with their audiences. The iAIM2 acronym stands for Intent, Audience, Issue, Message, and Media.

Starting at the top of the model, *intent* focuses the communicator on the purpose of the communication, the intended tone, and resulting change or impact expected from the communication. Not shown in the graphic are considerations for achieving intent: (1) what do you want your audience to take away from your communication? (2) how do you want them to feel after the communication? and (3) are you focusing on tasks and / or relationships?



The next step, *audience*, is to know your audience, why they are important, the best timing to communicate with the audience, and best medium to use for the communication. Additional considerations not shown in the graphic include meeting with smaller groups and external stakeholders (e.g., customers, suppliers, community groups) to elevate emotional connections.

Issue represents the situation or event that has inspired the need for the communication, getting to the core of the communication, the urgency of the subject matter, and examples to provide.

Identifying the most relevant information to communicate, the language needed to influence the audience, and calls to action are key elements of the *message* step.

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Considering how the communication is to be delivered is the final step. *Media* options could include social media, virtual meetings, texting, email, websites, phone calls, and in-person meetings. Important considerations in choosing a medium include (1) which medium will best reach the intended audience? (2) which one will foster understanding? and (3) which one provides feedback that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the communication?

By giving them the iAIM2 model to integrate into their communication strategy, we're empowering leaders to deliver messages that are on point, contextually appropriate, and deeply impactful. This isn't just about improving communication — it's about transforming leadership effectiveness and driving organizational success.

To cite:
Center for Creative Leadership (n.d.). *iAIM2 communicate model.*

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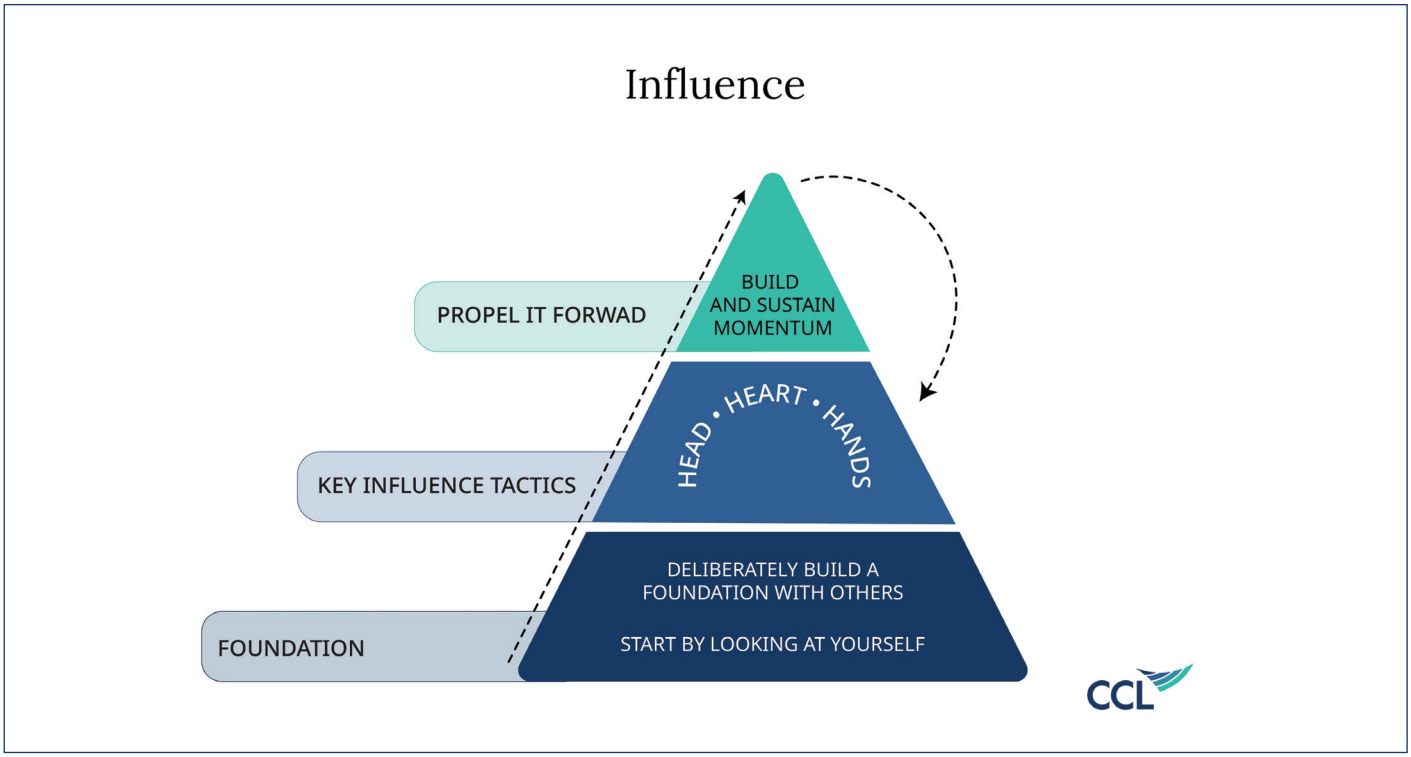

INFLUENCE

Influence — the power to shape actions, decisions, opinions, and thinking — is a cornerstone of effective leadership (Scharlatt & Smith, 2011). That's why we've developed an **Influence** model that's transforming how leaders approach influence.

This model reflects 6 components regarding the ability to influence. The pyramid graphic represents the components of strategic influence. Starting with the foundation, *look at yourself* and *deliberately build a foundation with others*, the prospective influencer is asked to establish clear goals for the interaction and assess the audience.

The next level in the pyramid illustrates *3 key influence tactics* that enable the influencer to personalize an approach through logical appeals (head), emotional appeals (heart), and cooperative appeals (hands). According to the model, logical appeals tap into people's rational selves and intellect. Logical influencers use facts, data, evidence, and specific practical information to influence others. Emotional influencers connect with others on shared goals, values, sense of service, or desire for a shared outcome. Finally, cooperative appeals involve collaboration, consultation, and alliances. The model suggests that cooperative influencers think in terms of "win-wins" for all involved, consult with others to get their buy-in, and / or offer something in return.

The top of the pyramid, *propel it forward*, reflects the ongoing process of learning and practice needed to develop this leadership skill.

We're seeing leaders transform their approach to influence by embracing this model. They're moving beyond one-size-fits-all tactics to create personalized, strategic approaches that drive real results.

To cite:

Scharlatt, H. & Smith, R. (2011) *Influence: Gaining commitment, getting results* (Second Edition). Center for Creative Leadership.

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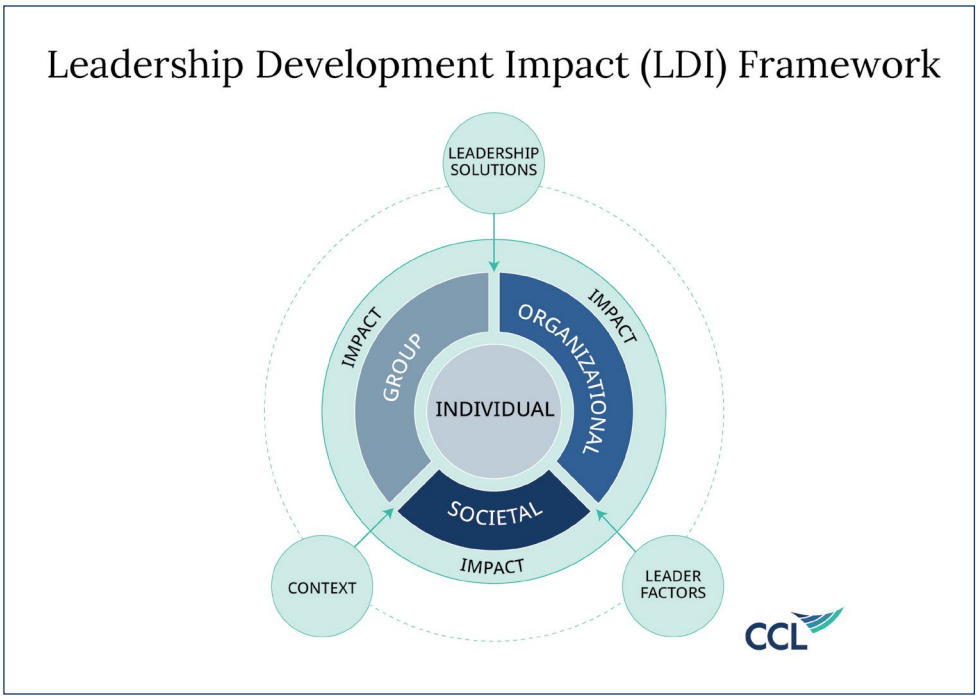
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IMPACT (LDI) FRAMEWORK

We've pioneered the **Leadership Development Impact (LDI) Framework**, a comprehensive approach that showcases the multi-layered impact of our leadership development initiatives. Organizations can use our framework to assess expected outcomes and analyze key factors influencing the success of these programs.

At the heart of our dynamic, circular model lies the *individual* — the cornerstone of many leadership development programs. From there, we expand our focus to encompass *group, organizational,* and *societal* impacts. While not all of our cutting-edge programs aim to influence all 4 levels, they invariably drive meaningful change at the individual level.

We measure individual impact through observable shifts in attitudes (such as reduced work-related stress), mindsets (like enhanced self-awareness), behaviors (including improved communication), and overall effectiveness (for instance, promotions). Importantly, we view these levels of impact as interconnected outcomes rather than isolated events. Our holistic approach allows us to measure potential changes across all 4 impact levels.



In addition to the levels of impact, the framework includes 3 factors that contribute to the effectiveness of leadership development programs. These contributing factors are (1) *leader factors* (e.g., readiness, willingness, and other individual difference characteristics relevant to development), (2) *leadership solutions* (e.g., content, design characteristics and delivery elements, cohesiveness and flow), and (3) *context* (e.g., internal organizational factors, such as culture, support, and leadership or other organizational changes, as well as external factors such as shifts in the industry and marketplace, and significant economic and social issues or changes). Similarly, contributing factors dynamically interact with one another. The measurement approach is determined by the level(s) of impact targeted by the leadership solution and the most relevant contributing factor(s).

To cite:

Stawiski, S., Jeong, S. & Champion, H. (2020). *Leadership development impact (LDI) framework.* Center for Creative Leadership. https://doi.org/10.35613/ccl.2020.2040

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MODEL OF LEADER COMPETENCIES

CCL's **Model of Leader Competencies** delineates 20 critical competencies driving leader effectiveness. This model illustrates the expansive repertoire of knowledge, skills, and abilities that empower individuals in leadership roles and responsibilities. While our model has expanded over time, we've maintained 3 core categories that serve as our organizing framework: *leading yourself, leading others,* and *leading the organization* as an organizing framework.

Our model is the result of research and expert analysis. We engaged approximately 20 subject matter experts (SMEs) within CCL to review 94 leadership competencies and 5 derailment factors from our comprehensive battery we use in our 360-degree assessments. Here's how we developed this model:

Scale Sort I. We provided each expert with 99 cards, each featuring a scale name. They were tasked with clustering related competencies and naming each cluster. We then documented and analyzed these results, proposing categories based on the frequency of competency groupings.

Scale Sort II. We brought in a fresh group of SMEs to review, modify, and refine the proposed scale categories. This iterative process ensured we captured the most effective and relevant category names. Our experts also had the flexibility to reassign competencies between categories if needed, ensuring optimal fit and coherence.

Final Review. We formed a dedicated group to address any outstanding issues regarding category names or scale placement. Our SMEs then made final decisions on category names and competency groupings, resulting in our 3 conceptual categories: Leading Others, Leading the Organization, and Leading Yourself.

By continually refining and applying this model, we're staying at the forefront of leadership development. We're not just adapting to the changing needs of today's dynamic organizations — we're anticipating and shaping the future of leadership.

To cite:
McCauley, C. D. (2006). *Developmental assignments: Creating learning experiences without changing jobs.* Center for Creative Leadership.

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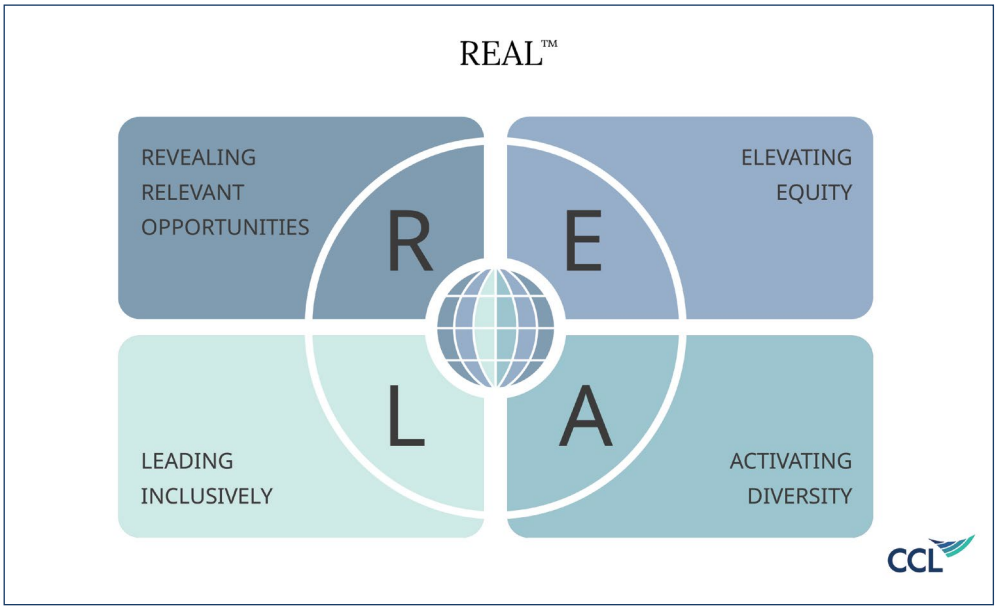
REAL™

The **REAL™** framework is our approach to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). This framework incorporates "appreciative inquiry" (Cooperrider, Whitney & Stavros, 2008) to uncover truths through facts, data, and historical context from local, national, and global perspectives. Our research-informed model consists of 4 steps, each designed to drive meaningful change in organizations.



The first step, *revealing relevant opportunities,* begins by exploring the organization's complex system and identifying the most impactful opportunities and strategic actions for change. We prompt leaders with thought-provoking questions like, "How can we ensure our policies are written with a diverse and inclusive lens?" and "What practices can we implement to foster a genuine sense of belonging and fairness?"

Elevating equity focuses leaders on discussing who truly benefits when EDI efforts succeed. We encourage deep reflection with questions such as, "What is our organization's purpose and role in shaping a more equitable society?" and "How can we address power imbalances within our structure?"

In the 3rd step in the model, *activating diversity,* we focus on recognizing and engaging differences among stakeholders, setting clear goals, and unlocking the full potential of every team member. Our approach challenges leaders to consider, "How can we prepare our people to lead effectively in the context of evolving organizational cultures and social identities?" and "What innovative approaches can we take to stand out in our EDI efforts?"

The final step in the REAL framework, *leading inclusively,* empowers leaders to identify and mitigate bias, build compassion, foster allyship, manage conflict effectively, and bring out the best in every team member. We prompt leaders to reflect on questions like, "How can I cultivate and promote psychological safety?" and "What concrete steps can I take to ensure every team member's insights and experiences contribute to solving our most pressing challenges?"

By continually applying the REAL framework in our EDI work, we're not just adapting to change — we're driving it. This approach exemplifies our commitment to pioneering leadership development worldwide that meets the evolving needs of today's diverse and dynamic organizations. Through REAL, we're equipping leaders with the tools and mindsets needed to create truly inclusive, equitable, and high-performing teams and organizations.

To cite:

Dunne-Moses, A., Dawkins, M. A., Ehrlich, V. E., Clerkin, C. & Chelsea, C. (2023). *The research foundations for REAL: A framework for leadership action in equity, diversity & inclusion.* Center for Creative Leadership. https://cclinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/realresearch.pdf

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TEAM EFFECTIVENESS FRAMEWORK

Our **Team Effectiveness Framework**, based on theory and research, identifies critical areas in which teams must channel their collective effort and energy. The framework is visually represented as a circular model with 4 overlapping sections, each representing a critical direction for team effort:

1. *Core:* The foundational purpose and guiding principles.

2. *Collective Mindset:* An open, collaborative team perspective.

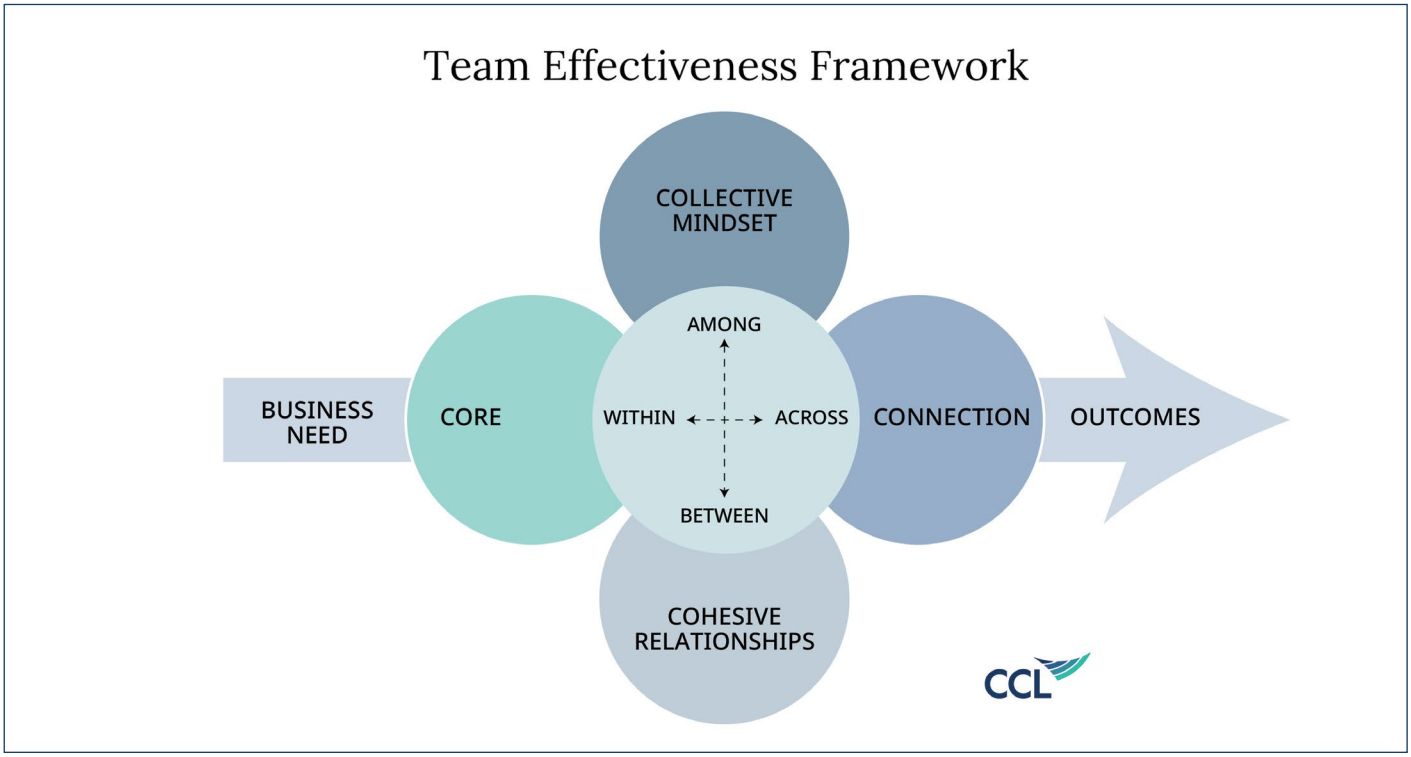
3. *Connection:* Cross-team links for innovation and efficiency.

4. *Cohesive Relationships:* Fostering a psychologically safe, inclusive team environment.

At the center of the model are the team's business needs and outcomes, emphasizing that all efforts should ultimately contribute to achieving the team's goals.

The Team Effectiveness Framework is grounded in decades of research on team performance and effectiveness. It synthesizes key findings from seminal works in the field, including Hackman's model of team effectiveness (1987), Kozlowski and Ilgen's integrated model of team effectiveness (2006), and Mathieu et al.'s review of team effectiveness (2008), among others.

We've intentionally designed this framework to be both comprehensive and concise, capturing the most critical areas for team development while remaining accessible and actionable for leaders and team members. The overlapping nature of the 4 sections in the visual model underscores the interconnected and mutually reinforcing nature of these areas.



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By focusing on these 4 directions, teams can create a strong foundation for success, fostering a sense of shared purpose, collaborative mindset, strong relationships, and effective cross-team connections (Loignon, Wormington & Hallenbeck, 2022). This holistic approach ensures that teams are well-equipped to navigate the complexities of modern organizational environments and deliver superior results.

We apply this framework across our team development programs, helping teams at all levels enhance their effectiveness and achieve their full potential. As team-based work continues to be a cornerstone of organizational success, the CCL Team Effectiveness Framework provides a valuable roadmap for cultivating high-performing teams.

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Loignon, A., Wormington, S. & Hallenbeck, G. (2022). *Reconsidering myths about teamwork using CCL's framework on team effectiveness.* Center for Creative Leadership. https://doi.org/10.35613/ccl.2022.2052

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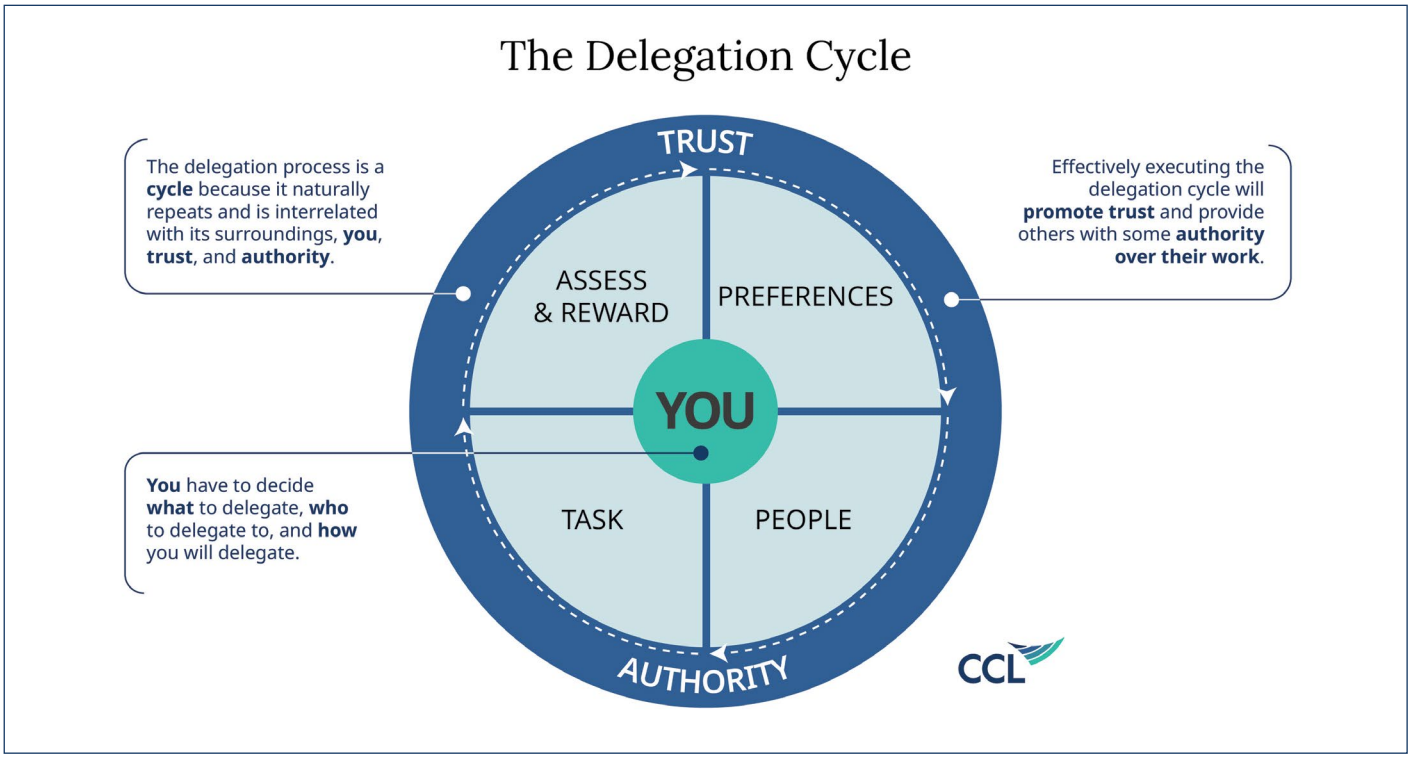
THE DELEGATION CYCLE

Leaders can't do it all, and attempts to do so typically fail. That's why we developed the **Delegation Cycle**, a model that leaders can use to to improve their delegation practices and team empowerment. Effectively delegating involves assigning new projects and responsibilities to individuals or teams and providing the authority, resources, direction, and support needed to achieve the expected results (Turregano, 2013).



The delegation model, therefore, starts with leaders' (labeled "You" in the model) *preferences* for delegation. The model proposes that leaders who delegate effectively know their work preferences and what they want done. The next step in the process is knowing the *people* to whom tasks might be assigned. Effective delegators in this process assign people tasks, responsibilities, and duties that will positively reflect them and their team. The 3rd step involves defining the *task*, specifying the purpose of the task, and explaining the reason(s) why it needs to be accomplished. The 4th and final step in the model involves leaders working with the individual or team to develop a process for *assessing*, sharing, and *rewarding* accomplishments.

The Delegation Cycle is graphically presented as a circular process because it's considered repetitive. The outer ring represents the benefits that can result from effective delegation: *trust* within the work team and *authority* or autonomy to accomplish the work. Without trust and authority, the delegation cycle will fall apart (Turregano, 2013). The secondary ring identifies the 4 delegation steps. "You" (the leader) is prominently placed in the center to emphasize the point that delegating work does not mean relinquishing responsibility for its completion.

The Delegation Cycle is based on the developers' 25 years of experience working with leaders to improve their delegation experiences and a review of published research on the topic.

To cite:
Turregano, C. (2013). *Delegating effectively: A leader's guide to getting things done.* Center for Creative Leadership.

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Concluding Thoughts

At CCL, we've always believed in the transformative power of leadership. For over 50 years, we've been dedicated to bringing out the best in leaders at every level, from first-time managers to global decision-makers. Our journey has been driven by a simple yet powerful belief: a brighter future begins with the people who lead us there. Our models and frameworks aren't just theoretical constructs — they're catalysts for real change, helping leaders develop the mindsets, capacities, and capabilities needed to excel in an ever-changing world.

We understand that leadership is always evolving, and so are we. Our hands-on solutions go beyond skill development, honoring each leader's unique starting point and enabling new and deeper ways of thinking. As we continue to push the boundaries of leadership development, we're guided by a simple truth: better leaders build a better world. From fostering more inclusive and equitable workplaces to tackling complex global challenges, we believe in the power of leadership to drive positive change.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to thinking big and doing bigger, always with an eye toward creating a brighter, more inclusive future for all. We're excited about the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, confident in the life-changing potential inside every leader and every organization. Because at CCL, we believe that for all things humanly possible, it begins with leadership.

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