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FIRST TIME LEADER

A GUIDE BOOK





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Congratulations, you're now in a Leadership role!

When asked about their leadership style, many successful senior leaders are most likely to refer to their experiences and learning from early leadership or managerial roles.

Whilst it is great that they learn immensely from these early experiences, it is also true that organizations, and individuals themselves often overlook their first leadership experience, which is the most fundamental challenge in their leadership journey.

High performance in an Individual Contributor role is not always a predictor of performance or potential in a higher level leadership role.

As per research by the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL),

- Close to 30% of first-time managers felt they were not ready to lead others to begin with
- 60% said they never received any support when they transitioned into their first leadership role
- No wonder 50% of managers in organizations are ineffective

Understanding the 'new' shifting definition of success

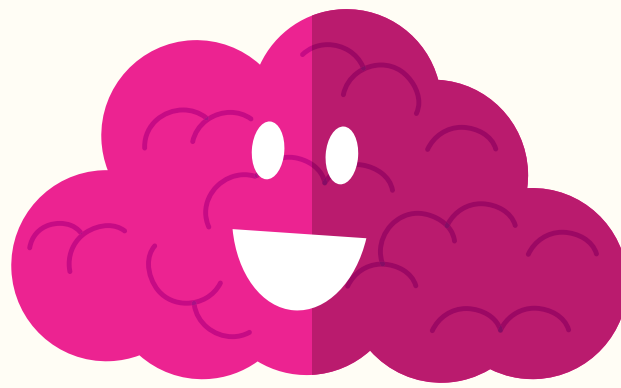
It's natural for us to feel a sense of urgency and an 'action' bias when given a new, bigger and challenging role. Combining this urgency and tendency to act with the ability to reflect, think and plan will strengthen the effectiveness of our actions!

Some questions to answer to define what success means for you in the new role

- How does my role contribute to the organization's vision, mission and future strategy?
- What are the organization's and my manager's expectations from me?
- What impact will achieving set goals & objectives have on the organization, team and me?



MINDSET SHIFTS



- Strong individual performance \neq Strong team, functional or organizational performance
- In this role, some of my existing behaviours will serve as strong enablers; others could even impede growth



Once you know what SUCCESS looks like in the new role, it's important to introspect:

What are some of my existing skills & behaviours that will enable driving performance?

What are some skills & behaviours that I may need to develop?

“Self-awareness is the KEY to self-mastery”

Bridging the gap between WHO WE ARE
and what the role demands. Ask yourself:

**What's your
purpose in this
role? How will
you contribute?**

**What excites you
most about your
leadership
role?**

**2 identified
strengths you
will nurture**

**2 development
areas you have
identified**



**FOR ACHIEVEMENT TO BECOME
A NATURAL BY PRODUCT,**

SHIFT YOUR FOCUS FROM

~~ACHIEVEMENT~~

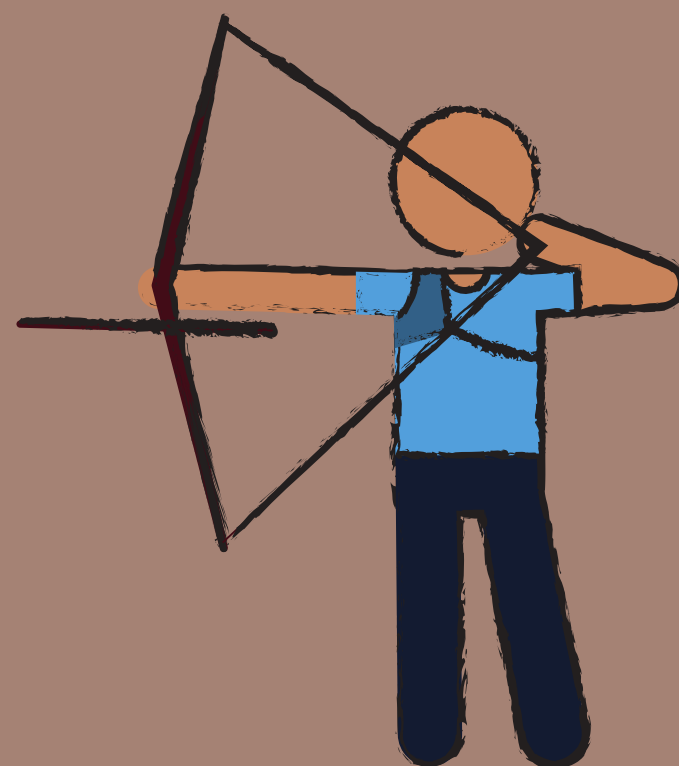


PURPOSE

~~COMPETITION~~

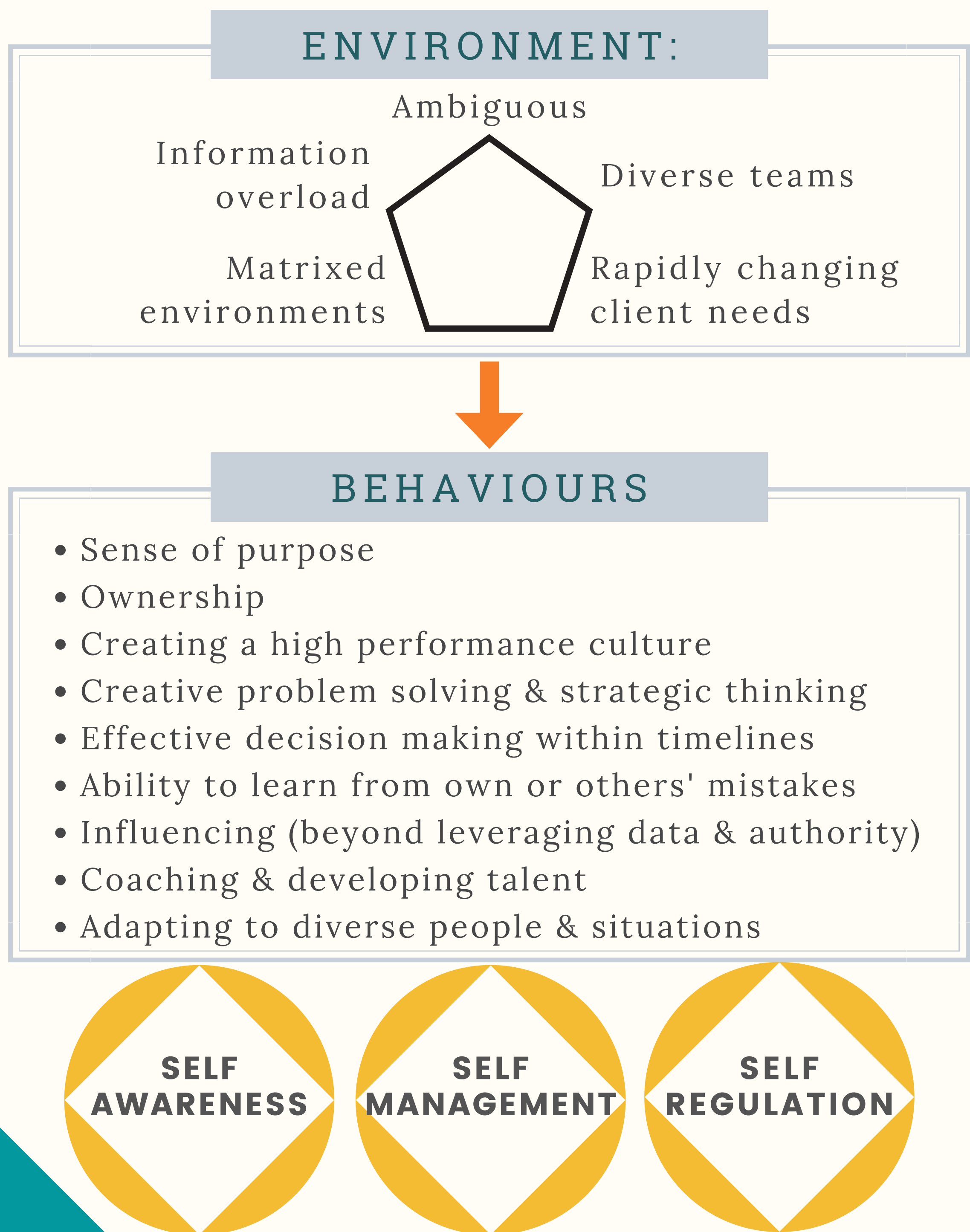


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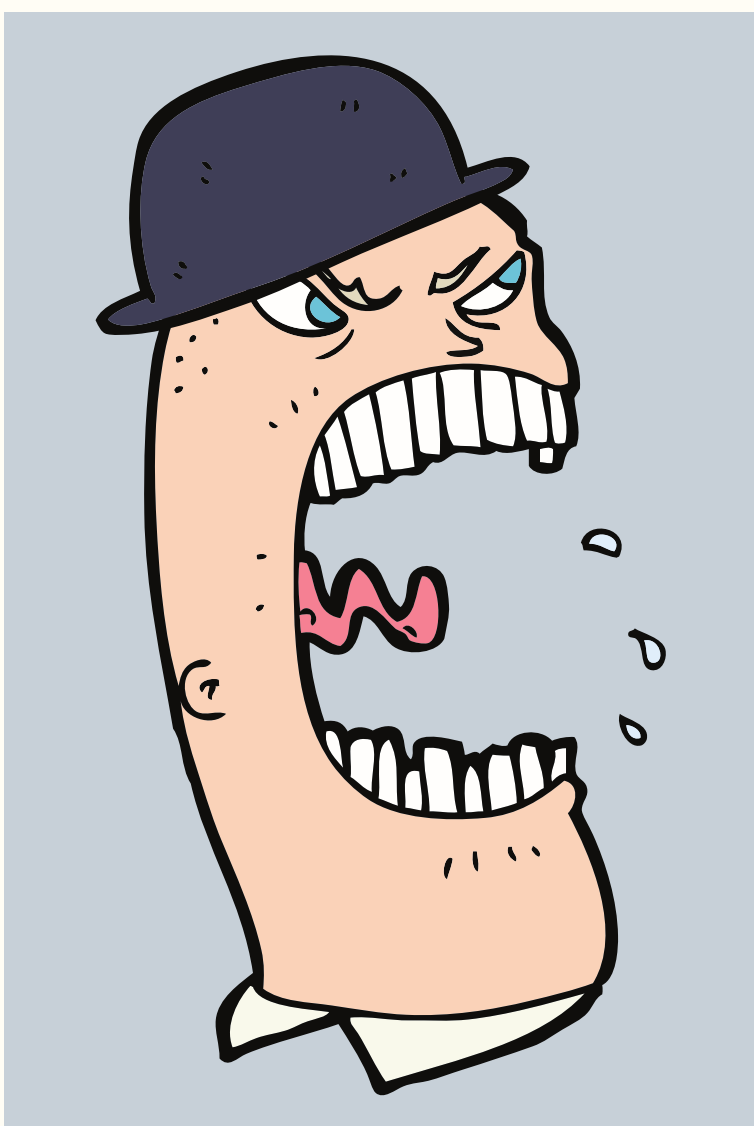
Behaviours that will **ENABLE** your leadership transition

While technical and functional skills will be role-based, below are some behaviours that are critical to the transition from an IC role to a Leadership role.



5 HABITS THAT CAN HOLD YOU BACK

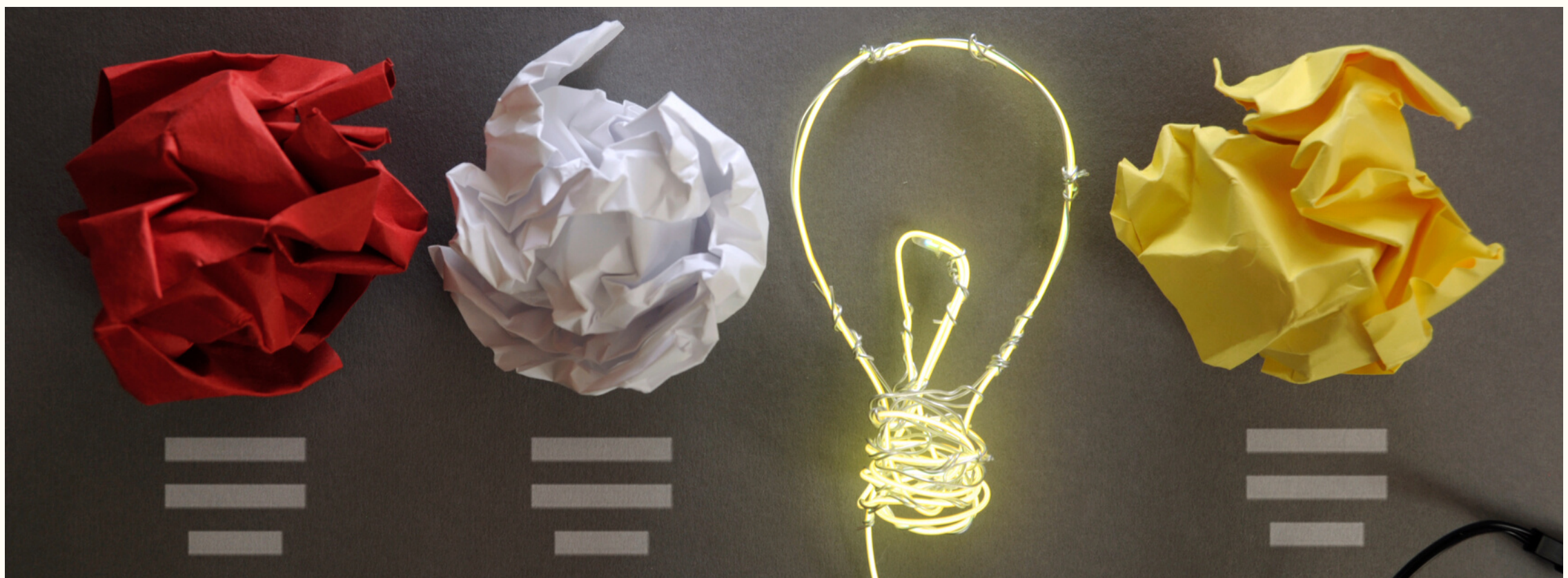
- The need to always be in control or have things done your way.
- The need to win at all costs - whether it matters or not.
Choose your battles!
- The need to know it all- A leader need not have all the answers. It's ok to say you don't know and/or seek inputs and feedback when required.



- The need to react or respond immediately, especially when you are angry or stressed - Volatility and anger will not change the person you are interacting with or improve the situation. Instead, take a pause, reflect, re-frame and then respond.
- The need to deflect blame onto other events and people.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING

There's a lot to do and achieve, and for success in this role & future roles, balancing the achieving/doing with a focus on self-development is key.



Here are ways to nurture your strengths and focus on your development areas:

- 70% of learning happens by DOING - take on a project or assignment to help you cultivate desired behaviours. Think about playing a sport, or a musical instrument. Learning something new feels rather uncharacteristic, so imagine what behaviour change can feel like! To become more effective leaders, it's important to do what our everyday or 'natural' selves may not always do. The beginning may feel strange or less spontaneous, but remember, that's not a problem - if anything, that is GOOD NEWS!

- Work with a coach or mentor
- Seek feedback from stakeholders - peers, team members, managers



When focusing on development, you are bound to feel uncomfortable. However, initial discomfort does not mean you are being inauthentic in your behaviour:

When focusing on development, you are bound to feel uncomfortable. However, initial discomfort does not mean you are being inauthentic in your behaviour: *Demonstrating certain behaviours may challenge your current sense of 'self' or identity. This does not mean you are being inauthentic. It is crucial to move out of one's comfort zone to grow. As researcher Herminia Ibarra says, "The moments that challenge our sense of self are the ones that can teach us most about leading effectively."*

The paradox of change is that the only way to alter the way we think is by doing the very things our habitual thinking keeps us from doing.

- Herminia Ibarra

Shifting gears: Focus on your development plan



- Coach
- Mentor within the organization
- Set goals for self & practice self-reflection to track progress on goals
- Seek specific feedback
- Move out of your comfort zone to seek an assignment/project that will help develop key behaviours
- Understand learning can happen through different forms

MANAGE YOUR ENERGY (NOT YOUR TIME!)

There is one universal struggle that most new leaders/first-time managers and mid-level leaders face: **SO MUCH TO DO, SO LITTLE TIME!**

Most individuals (and organizations) invest in developing skills and competence. Very few help build and sustain their capacity/energy.

EXAMPLE:

Person X works for 12-14 hours a day. On returning home, he/she is left with very little energy to interact with family or pursue activities outside of work. Towards the end of the day, person X also feels the need for either caffeine or any sugary drink to feel more energetic and upbeat. On certain days, he/she also becomes irritable with others, and lets the lack of energy impact relationships, productivity and wellbeing in general.

CHALLENGE

Our circumstances are hardly going to change – be it deadlines, chaos, unpredictability, or all the various things that happen at the workplace.



SOLUTION

If our circumstances don't change, it is US who need to change to be able to sustain ourselves in the long-term without feeling frustration, burnout and disengagement.



Person X decides to take things in his/her control with the following changes:

- Begins to exercise for 30 minutes a day
- Meditate for 10 minutes in the day
- Avoid screen time between 20-30 minutes before sleeping
- Replace sugar and caffeine/alcohol with high fibre, fresh food
- Begins to display more compassion not only towards own self, but also towards those around him/her in tough situations (i.e. instead of blaming, he/she takes a more empathetic view of situations)
- Begins each day with gratitude

As a result:

Person X begins to feel more energetic and productive. This is not to say that as first time managers and mid-level leaders we shouldn't draw a line on the amount of work we take on. It is only to say that having stretch targets and tight deadlines is now the new normal. So, our best bet to achieve results and manage time is actually to **MANAGE OUR ENERGY!**

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