What every CEO should know about the psychology of strategic leadership

Eight challenges for sustainable success

> " *The term head to head competition is literal. Global competition is not just product vs. product, company vs. company. It is mind-set vs. mind-set.* "

Michael G. Hamel & C.K Prahalad

Introduction

Sustaining consistently high levels of corporate performance is the goal. It's always been a tough challenge. Ask Marconi, Scottish & Newcastle, Safeway and other firms listed in the FTSE 250 that have now disappeared. And it's getting tougher.

Shifting industry dynamics, global competition, and technological change are key dynamics in shaping survival and success. But if turning in consistent levels of performance over the long haul is a rare combination of strategic repositioning, the disciplined allocation of resources and superb execution then the focus must be on business leadership.

We can blame the weather or the government, but it is the task of leaders to recognise when the battleground of competition is shifting and when choices need to be made to reposition the organisation. And it is leaders who manage execution and coordinate the implementation process to direct organisational resource to where it will have most impact.

These are difficult challenges for leaders. And our research indicates that psychology is part of the reason for strategic decline and **why organisations**:

- **find it difficult to exploit and manage the process of business innovation**

- **over-stretch themselves and mismanage the growth momentum**

- **usually get it right by pursuing the customer, but forget the future customer**

- **get into trouble when they believe their own public relations**

- **don't always see the benefits when they invest in people capability**

- **might be disappointed when they place control and efficiency at the heart of their strategy**

- **need to deploy Trouble-Shooters but only for a short time**

- **should have another think before implementing major transformation**

Leadership dynamics and business challenges

Based on a data set of over 500 senior executives, we identified the impact of leadership psychology on strategic decision making and implementation.

This analysis of the personality and motivational dynamics of business leaders suggests how organisations can optimise the odds of long-term success by overcoming eight business challenges:

- **speeding up the process of strategic creativity**

- **managing sustainable expansion**

- **getting close to the future customer**

- **building strategic space and maintaining corporate reputation**

- **making people a key driver of success**

- **exploiting the gains of administrative consistency and financial discipline**

- **navigating through the tough times whilst playing the long game**

- **managing the implementation of organisational change**

What is needed is a shrewd insight into the diversity of business leadership, recognising how different business leaders think and act, and understanding what motivates them and the dynamics that might derail them.

Different business leaders bring distinctive strengths to the strategic debate. But these strengths also have the potential to tip into risks that undermine their contribution.

Nothing is more dangerous than an idea when it is the only one you have.

Emile Chartier

A framework of strategic leadership

Business Challenges[1] was developed by AM Azure Consulting in the mid 90s in response to the recognition that "martini managers" - managers equally effective "anytime, anyplace, anywhere" - were in short supply. Despite the best efforts of the competency enterprise and associated activity in management training and business education, the outcomes of succession reviews indicated a shortage of "all singing-all dancing" executives.

And the growing research in strategic leadership suggested that organisations might be better served by assuming a leadership model of "horses for courses" rather than attempt to access large numbers of "strategic leaders for all seasons".

The Business Challenges framework provides a vocabulary to connect strategy and leadership. The model maps out eight themes that can be used in pinpointing an organisation's strategic emphasis and the focus of its capability, as well as in describing different leadership patterns.

Strategy

- What are the major strategic challenges we face?
- On what battle grounds are we going to compete?

Organisational Capability

- What do we need to do to:
    - Stay in the game
    - Excel and win?
- What combination of professional expertise and knowledge will build the capability we need to advance our strategic position?

Leadership Effectiveness

- What are the implications for leadership capability?
- In which areas do we need outstanding leadership?

[1] "Competences: Dialogue Without a Plot", Executive Development, vol 7, no 6, 1994, A Munro & B Andrews

Business Challenges: eight strategic themes

ARCHITECT - redefining the organisation infrastructure to create new operating methods and practices; exploiting technological capability to create new organisational structures, systems and operating styles; conducting a re-appraisal of the organisational infrastructure in the context of improved technological capability

TROUBLE-SHOOTER - identifying and removing unproductive and inefficient business function; tackling those business activities which are no longer contributing to corporate performance; divesting unprofitable activities which are failing to support corporate priorities and objectives

REGULATOR - focusing attention on the efficiency and consistency of all internal processes; monitoring work flow for opportunities to standardise organisational activity; applying financial discipline and administrative control over organisational activity to gain improved levels of efficiency

INTEGRATOR - raising the overall skill level of the work-force through focusing resources on training, development, recognition and reward; raising levels of staff capability and motivation to improve organisational loyalty and pride; breaking down functional differences and resolving complex views to unite the efforts of different groups

VISIONARY - planning next generation products and services to formulate an innovative business strategy; developing new business concepts which redefine the rules of business success; addressing the impact of emerging trends and developments in the market-place for the organisation's long-term strategic position

EXPLORER - investigating opportunities to break into new markets in pursuit of a diversification strategy; developing relationships with other key players in the industry to explore scope for alliances and joint ventures; identifying opportunities for the future growth and expansion of the business

BUILDER - translating business strategy into sales and marketing priorities; reviewing the customer service delivery process for areas of improvement; exploiting the organisation's customer-base through attention to sales and marketing activity

LOBBYIST - representing the organisation's interests across the wider business community to improve corporate image; planning a programme of corporate communication which gains greater influence and freedom of manoeuvre for the organisation; building relationships with key players throughout the industry to improve the company's standing in the market-place

Business Challenges and leadership assessment

This analysis is based on over 500 senior managers who undertook a series of assessments as part of a variety of executive resourcing and development assignments. In addition to Business Challenges, the group also completed OPQ32i and the Hogan Development Survey, well established self report instruments.

The data set was predominantly UK based (70%), with a spread of other nationalities. General management was the typical functional background, followed by Finance, Sales & Marketing and a mix of others in IT, Operations, HR and Corporate Affairs.

The population came from a mix of industry sectors, with a skew towards financial services, utilities, transport, consumer and media. Around 16% of the group were from the public sector.

For each of the eight Business Challenges, we mapped out the correlates with the OPQ and Hogan Development Survey.

This analysis identifies how personality and motivation underpin the leadership gains and hazards associated with each Business Challenge and indicates ways in which organisations can optimise the gains and mitigate the risks of different leadership approaches.

Business Challenges is a suite of self assessment questionnaires, incorporating a choice of response options, rating and forced choice. The version used in this exercise was preference based, 84 pairs of statements profiling eight themes of strategic leadership.

The **OPQ32i** is an ipsative measure of personality for use in a variety of occupational applications. It maps out 32 scales, although the test publishers indicate the results can be summarised against the established Big 5 of personality.

The **Hogan Development Survey** is a personality questionnaire that highlights the "dark side" of leadership and the factors that can derail leadership careers. Based on 168 items, the HDS measures 11 themes that represent risks to leadership effectiveness.

Visionary challenge

Why organisations:

- find it difficult to exploit and manage the process of business innovation

And how organisations can optimise the odds of long-term success by: **speeding up the process of strategic creativity**

" *Strategic experiments are likely to fail if the company relies solely on the heroism of a hyper talented individual.* "

Vijay Govindarajan and Chris Trimble

Organisations need Visionaries, leaders with the imagination to generate the product and service innovations that redefine the rules of the business game and shape the corporate future.

The psychological profile of Visionaries:
Our analysis indicates that Visionaries manage ambiguity and uncertainty, drawing on strengths in forward planning to look ahead and generate ideas about future possibilities. Motivated by a changing environment, Visionaries dislike the constraints of an imposed structure, valuing their independence and look to operate to their own distinctive agenda.

The psychological risks for Visionaries:

- going off on a personal tangent, pursuing ideas of individual interest rather than engaging fully with others to translate promising concepts into a practical programme of action

- a naiveté that assumes good business ideas about the future will speak for themselves rather than lobby vigorously with key stakeholders to build support and backing

- becoming sidelined from the "rough and tumble" of corporate debate rather than compete assertively for "mental shelf space" with their colleagues

Visionary leadership: the gains and risks

Organisations committed to long-term success optimise the upsides of their Visionary leaders, whilst avoiding the potential downside. Visionaries need breathing space to develop their ideas. Too much corporate control will stifle creativity. Insufficient control and Visionary leaders will bankrupt the firm in search of the next big idea.

Shrewd organisations speed up the process of business innovation when:

- strategy isn't formulated by the "law of the squeaky wheel". Instead the organisation is open minded and comprehensive in its trawl for the most promising ideas. And the issues are reviewed sympathetically and objectively, not subject to the "line them up to shoot them down corporate fairground"

- the top team take time to go out and meet those leaders who might not typically come to their attention, and are willing to listen to controversial perspectives that might challenge their thinking

- they help Visionary leaders spend time on what they do best, and provide support from those professionals and executives who understand the mechanics of organisational politics and decision making

- discourage corporate isolationism to ensure Visionary leaders are also engaged in the practical problems of their peers and accessing direct feedback from the market place

"To turn really interesting ideas and fledgling technologies into a company that can continue to innovate for years, it requires a lot of disciplines.

Steve Jobs
Apple

Explorer challenge

Why organisations:

- over-stretch themselves and mismanage the growth momentum

And how organisations can optimise the odds of long-term success by: **managing sustainable expansion**

> 66 *We're on a pirate ship at sea...I'm your captain. We're going to go out and raid all the other ships on the ocean.*

Ted Turner, Cable News Network

The Explorer theme provides strategic energy to push into the market place and identify opportunities for growth: moving into new territory, diversifying the product-service mix, and spotting where partnerships, mergers and acquisitions can accelerate expansion.

The psychological profile of Explorers:
The personality and motivational pattern for Explorer leaders highlights highly competitive individuals, looking to impress their colleagues with the boldness of their business thinking. Commercially minded, Explorers are also confident in presenting high profile plans to command organisational attention and persuade others to their ideas.

The psychological risks for Explorers:

- over-selling the arguments for growth with a confidence about future possibilities that is based more on personal ambition rather than business imperative

- drawing on persuasive influence to build enthusiasm for plans rather than work through the detail of different proposals and options

- embarking on an ambitious course of action without taking the time to build emotional commitment from others

Explorer leadership: the gains and risks

Momentum in business is everything. When organisations stand still, they fall back quickly as more adventurous competitors seize the initiative. Organisations looking to pass the test of corporate longevity find ways to manage the growth momentum. Explorer leaders provide strategic edge, but over-deployed, they have the potential to take the organisation into misguided ventures.

Organisations manage sustainable growth when they:

- build in robust disciplines in risk management to evaluate fully the extravagant business claims that Explorers may be tempted to make

- establish clear ethical standards and operating values as a balance to the intellectual exuberance and personal aspirations that Explorers bring to strategic debate

- apply intense debate to analyse the proposals of Explorers and ensure critical scrutiny and business logic aren't out manoeuvred by persuasive charm

- partner Explorers with tough minded pragmatists to temper the ambition

" You have to combine both things: invention and innovation focus, plus the company that can commercialize things and get them to people.

Larry Page, Google

Builder challenge

Why organisations:

- usually get it right by pursuing the customer, but can forget the future customer

And how organisations can optimise the odds of long-term success by: **getting close to the future customer**

> 66 *Today's customer preferences have no inherent predictive value for tomorrow's markets.*

Nicola Diligu

Builders understand Tom Watson's insight: *"there aren't any categories of problems here. There's just one. Some of us aren't paying enough attention to our customers."* Builders have a shrewd recognition of customer needs and know the importance of coordinating the organisational infrastructure to respond to their expectations.

The psychological profile of Builders:
Builders are expressive individuals, communicating their ideas with passion and commitment. The motivational pattern is one of drawing on a commercial outlook to present a credible business position. And it is this combination of innovation, commercial mindedness and communication impact that makes Builders a credible leadership group.

The psychological risks for Builders:

- an enthusiasm for the customer that may not stand back to weigh up the full range of organisational risks

- presenting convincing proposals that may be somewhat one-dimensional rather than addressing the broad sweep of the organisation's future challenges

Builder leadership: the gains and risks

Builders are at their best focusing on the commercial realities of the customer and putting in place solutions to keep fine tuning the product and service proposition. Builders represent a key leadership resource, and organisations committed to maintaining success ensure the Builder mind-set is ingrained within the culture, across all functions and at every level. The challenge for organisations is providing consistent service to current customers whilst getting close to the future customer.

Organisations stay close to the future customer - and avoid the hazards of the Builder - when they:

- look long and hard at the detail of the claims made at sales meetings and conferences rather than get caught up in the energy of future projections

- keep alert to the emerging competitors who are identifying niches with the potential to disrupt the current position

- ensure the population of current and emerging Builders are challenged in their thinking about the changing market place to develop scenarios about future customer profitability

- keep monitoring the specifics of customer activity and profitability, looking for anomalies of service, cost and profitability, indicative of emerging trends in the market place

The most important single thing is to focus obsessively on the customer. Our goal is to be earth's most customer-centric company.

Jeff Bezos, Amazon

Lobbyist challenge

Why organisations:

- get into trouble when they believe their own public relations

And how organisations can optimise the odds of long-term success by: **building strategic space and maintaining corporate reputation**

> ❝ *Reality must take precedence over public relations, for Nature cannot be fooled.*
>
> Richard Feynman

Organisations need strategic space in which to operate. And space is created through imaginative public relations to connect to the public, building influence with key opinion formers, and maintaining connections to political and regulatory stakeholders.

The psychological profile of Lobbyists:
The personality and motivational profile for Lobbyists is of a group that draws on interpersonal skills to address the people agenda to build and maintain positive relationships across different stakeholder groups. Lobbyists look to put their best leadership foot forward, with little fear of failure. Motivated by status and power Lobbyists at best are compelling and forceful communicators, providing a credible and authoritative leadership presence to articulate the corporate position.

The psychological risks for Lobbyists:

- a reliance on relationship management rather than undertaking a critical analysis of the business fundamentals

- looking to present a "positive spin" on events rather than anticipate emerging operational problems

- a focus on the "leadership me" which looks to be the centre of corporate attention

Lobbyist leadership: the gains and risks

Lobbyists, at their best, make a distinctive impact in advancing the organisation's interests with opinion formers and decision makers to protect corporate reputation and build influence. Organisations need this leadership capability, during the good times to extend the sphere of their activity and during the tough times to deal with adversity and protect their space.

But wise firms are alert to the potential hazards of Lobbyist leadership. They:

- keep their Lobbyist leaders grounded in business realities, ensuring they understand the detail of the operation and the challenges it faces

- play a long-game, knowing that short-term media hype can only damage future reputation

- avoid giving Lobbyists too much influence within the organisation

- remove those Lobbyist leaders whose drive for power and status makes them, not the organisation, the headline of the story

"My name is on every car. You have my personal commitment that Toyota will work vigorously and unceasingly to restore the trust of our customers.

Akio Toyoda , Toyota

Integrator challenge

Why organisations**:**

- don't always see the benefits when they invest in people capability

And how organisations can optimise the odds of long-term success by: **making the HR function a key driver of success**

> *The contrast between what executives say about the importance of people and how they manage their organizations is unfortunate at best. At worst, it is a major contributor to poor organizational performance.*

Ed Lawler

Organisations have the challenge of coordinating the different talents and energies of the work force around a common purpose. Integrator leaders are instrumental in shaping organisational culture and in developing people capability.

The psychological profile of Integrators:
The personality and motivational profile indicates that Integrators are well meaning and well intentioned leaders. For Integrators, "people are our most important asset" isn't a cliché; it is their operating principle. Integrators have a positive outlook about others and their contribution, looking to involve and engage them in their thinking. Integrators are motivated to do the right thing and play by the rules, sensitive to differences, democratic in consultation and keen to support the development of others.

The psychological risks for Integrators:

- a reliance on others' good intentions to do the right thing rather than confront problems head on and establish a forthright agenda for change and improvement

- an under play of financial analysis and commercial thinking in clarifying the business logic of their plans

- taking a back-seat in strategic debate rather than establish an independent stance to push ideas forward and challenge the prevailing mindset.

Integrator leadership: the gains and risks

Integrators, particularly in a knowledge-based economy that looks to leverage expertise and creativity, represent an increasingly important strategic group. But organisations serious about playing for long-term success, have to rethink the leadership contribution of Integrators. The challenge is to translate well meaning proposals for employee potential and development into grounded business plans and implementation processes.

And organisations achieve the gains (and minimise the hazards) when:

- the top team ask themselves tough questions about their own interpersonal behaviour and impact to break down any political barriers and functional silos

- build trust as a critical element of culture to ensure that Integrator activity is a fundamental theme across all business activity, not something to hive off to the Human Resources function

- the HR function is part of mainstream decision making, held accountable for its contribution to business outcomes, and asked for greater innovation in shaping the implementation process and speed in the delivery of outcomes

- they invest in the development of HR professionals, equipping them in the skills of problem analysis, business judgement and project management
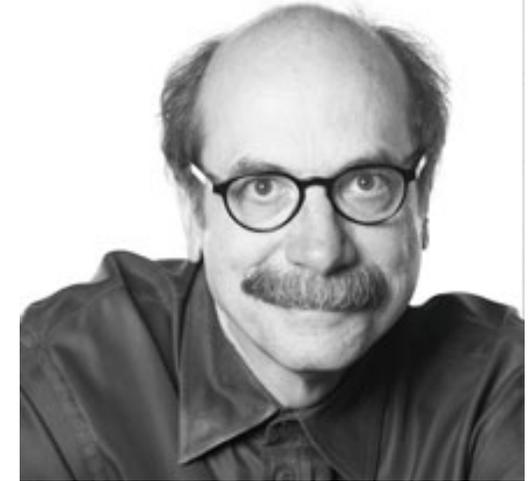
"The way I would measure leadership is this: of the people that are working with me, how many wake up in the morning thinking that the company is theirs?

David M. Kelley, IDEO

Regulator challenge

Why organisations:

- might be disappointed when they place control and efficiency at the heart of their strategy

And how organisations can optimise the odds of long-term success by: **exploiting the gains of administrative consistency and financial discipline**

> *It is time that financial types developed a greater tolerance for imprecision, because that's the way the world is.*
> John Burton

Tom Peters comments: *"When you go to war, you need to have both toilet paper and bullets at the right place at the right time."* For organisations there are major battles to fight; these are the fundamental decisions about the organisational future. There is also a series of skirmishes to out-manouevre competitors through smart advertising and shrewd pricing. There is also the detailed attention to logistics, the focus of Regulators.

The psychological profile of Regulators:
Regulators are organised leaders, attending to the detail of operating systems to ensure efficiency. The personality and motivational pattern highlights a leadership group which enjoys the familiarity of existing processes and procedures, attending to the detail of task analysis and implementation. Motivated by material reward, Regulators are conventional in their outlook, preferring to operate within established structures and systems.

The psychological risks for Regulators:

- a lack of innovative flair in identifying opportunities outside of the immediate business focus

- a caution that prefers incremental improvements in efficiency and stifles debate about radically different possibilities

- failing to give sufficient attention to the interpersonal dimension in engaging others as part of collective effort

Regulator leadership: the gains and risks

Regulators have a key role to play in sustaining high levels of corporate performance. Ongoing incremental gains in efficiency provide the kind of consistency that drives down cost, improves productivity and opens up an advantage vis a vis the competition. But left to their own devices, Regulators will keep turning the wheel of short-term efficiency, ignoring market place threats to long-term effectiveness.

Organisations manage the gains and minimise the hazards of Regulator leaders when they:

- gauge the timing of key senior appointments, recognising when a Regulator is needed to instil cost discipline, and when a Regulator's relentless drive on efficiency will hold the business back

- ensure Regulators are fully engaged in the debate about the organisation's long-term future, not side-lined as "systems number crunchers"

- conduct regular culls on bureaucracy to eliminate the operating procedures and manuals that Regulators might relish but are often a substitute for trust and common sense, and will weaken organisational culture

- require Regulators to spend time in the business, interacting regularly with front line staff in sales, service and production

It was crammed with minutiae. It specified precise cooking times for all products and temperature settings for all equipment. It fixed standard portions on every food item, down to the quarter ounce of onions and the thirty two slices per pound of cheese.

McDonald's operating manual

Trouble-Shooter challenge

Why organisations:

- need to deploy Trouble-Shooters but only for a short time

And how organisations can optimise the odds of long-term success by: **navigating through the tough times whilst playing the long game**

> *Leaders who are highly successful in chaotic contexts can develop an over inflated self-image, becoming legends in their own minds.*

David J. Snowden and Mary E. Boone

Organisations need Trouble-Shooters. Parkinson's Law explains why more input doesn't always translate into greater output, how activity becomes detached from results, and why productivity falls. It is Trouble Shooters who cut back the business weeds of the peripheral stuff that has grown to get back to strategic basics and restore profitability.

The psychological profile of Trouble Shooters:
Trouble Shooters relish the practical world of the facts and are suspicious of fanciful ideals. Assertive and outspoken in stating their views about the difficult issues, Trouble Shooters follow through to keep a focus on outcomes. Trouble Shooters aren't naïve; they see the world "as is" and are shrewd in identifying interpersonal realities, unimpressed by theoretical discussions of "what might be".

The psychological risks of Trouble Shooters:

- a short-term focus on pragmatics that lacks a longer-term vision of sustainable success

- a tendency to look for the worst-case scenario rather than formulate imaginative ideas about what is possible

- a commitment to tackle problems quickly that may take expedient short cuts

Trouble-Shooter leadership: the gains and risks

Trouble-Shooters take on the organisational mess created by their "adventurous" colleagues. Through a combination of pragmatic analysis, determination and interpersonal ruthlessness, they halt decline and turn around performance.

Organisations exploit the gains of Trouble-Shooters and minimise the hazards when they:

- develop a culture of simplicity based on a few key fundamentals, but know when to shift the corporate focus to emphasise long-term goals

- communicate an overall vision and guiding purpose about what the organisation is setting out to accomplish for the long-term

- build in checks and balances to avoid the "just do it" factor. "Just do it" may be an exhortation for fast turn around. It may also be permission for the kind of expediency that has damaging long-term consequences

- talk a lot about business integrity and reinforce a clear appreciation of ethical standards to keep leaders focused on good management practice

- don't generalise from the achievements of Trouble-Shooters in tackling one set of challenges to assume they represent any kind of corporate saviour who can sustain long-term success

Our strategy was to focus on the strength of the brick and get out of things where we're not world class.

Jorgen Vig Knudstorp, "the man who turned around Lego"

Architect challenge

Why organisations:

- should have another think before implementing major transformation

And how organisations can optimise the odds of long-term success by: **managing the implementation of organisational change**

> *I am a big believer in forcing change on large institutions for the sake of forcing change. The longer an organization stays intact, the less successful it is.*

Louis Gerstner, IBM Corp.

Architects are the coordinators of redesign and change to formulate a blue print for a more effective organisational infrastructure. When Trouble-Shooters have attempted improvement and failed, it may be that organisations need to rethink their fundamental business processes, how work is designed to implement technology that transforms the entire operating infrastructure.

The psychological profile of Architects:
Architects put ideas into context to develop an overall conceptual framework that makes sense of complexity. Architects enjoy flexibility to manage the ambiguity of changing environments, and are demotivated by the disciplines and constraints of structure.

The psychological risks of Architects:

- a lack of forceful push in persuading others to their ideas; Architects assume that powerful concepts rather than compelling arguments will set the agenda

- proposing ideas for organisational change that lack a grounding in commercial realities

- staying on the sidelines rather than seizing the strategic initiative to push forward their ideas forcefully

Architect leadership: the gains and risks

As technology pushes on relentlessly and employment practices shift, Architects should be well positioned to orchestrate major scale transformation. Organisations that accelerate the speed with which new operating models and work processes are embedded recognise the gains and the risks of Architect leaders.

They:

- opt for "fit for purpose" solutions rather than embark on pioneering technology. Architects may relish grand schemes but highly innovative systems may be expensive and complex to implement

- encourage Architect leaders to raise their organisational profile and become more engaged in strategic debate

- improve the interface between the IT function and other work areas to encourage dialogue between Architects and other business leaders

- impose the rigours of commercial discipline and project management. Here organisations keep asking difficult questions to ground promising concepts in the detail of do-ability, deadlines and delivery

" I can see the patterns.

Peter Wood
founder of Direct Line

Business Challenges and the strategic agenda for success

Key principles for sustainable success:

Success is a shifting target. All eight Business Challenges are relevant to any organisation, and bases need to be covered across all eight. But the emphasis will shift over time as the market place changes and strategy evolves. As Marshall Goldsmith puts it *"what got you here won't get you there."*

Combinations matter. Competitive advantage and sustainable success won't depend on any one Business Challenge. It is the combination of excellence in two or more themes that will make the difference.

Success hinges on pivot roles. Organisations need to access a range of different blend of leadership talents and styles, but focus is required to attain exceptional levels of performance. Knowing which roles are becoming more and less pivotal to future success is critical.

Manage the upside-downside factor. The trajectory of success also incorporates risks that need to be avoided. Each Business Challenge possess distinctive opportunities whilst incorporating specific hazards.

> *"What took the hill won't necessarily hold it.*
>
> Military Planner

Leadership and sustainable success

"Don't fall in love with ideas. By ideas I mean: systems, marketing approaches, technologies, partnerships, whatever. Because as soon as you as you fall in love with one approach, you lose sight of other possibilities. Every right idea eventually becomes the wrong idea.

Roger von Oech

Organisations committed to long-term success don't aim to create "balanced" leaders but they do create leadership alignment within the top team and across the executive population. And they value the kind of versatility which avoids functional and professional silo thinking. And they do it by:

- a **proactive appointments** process that reviews role requirements to deploy different leadership approaches at different times, accepting there are few "strategic leaders for all seasons" but leaders may have a limited shelf life

- coordinating a robust forum for **succession management** to discuss current and emerging leaders against the strategic challenges the organisation faces, not simply review listings of "high potentials" and slot names within organisational charts

- using a variety of mechanisms (peer networking, conferences, projects, secondments) to create **a shared understanding** of business priorities, harness the contribution of different leaders and encourage versatility of business outlook

- valuing diversity of business outlook and ensuring promotion processes aren't filling the **leadership pipeline** with the skills and mind-sets that drove past success

- making **character a key plank** within resourcing and development frameworks to build the levels of integrity and trust across the executive population that encourages genuine leadership cooperation and support

About us

Established in 1994, AM Azure Consulting works with a broad portfolio of clients – in the UK and internationally - in the design and implementation of online services in recruitment and selection; management assessment, development and career management; online leadership tool kits, 360° feedback; performance management and talent and succession management.

If you are interested in our approach to talent management, our consulting expertise, assessment tools and talent planning software:

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Or visit our website www.amazureconsulting.com for further information, including articles which you can download for free.

We:

- summarise complexity to provide solutions that are pragmatic and build and maintain momentum for our clients.

- help trouble-shoot the messy organisational problems to see the key issues, identify options and put in place actionable plans that make progress.

- cut to the chase to focus on the distinctive challenges of our clients. We enjoy the innovation that results from our clients with ideas and we help translate them into practical applications.

- draw on an extensive research base, library of resource and range of tool kits, and up-to-date thinking to help design and implement practical solutions quickly.