



CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGIC THINKING

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THE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT BLUEPRINT

Since the 1950s, corporations around the world have implemented leadership development programs for leaders at all levels -- investing considerable human and financial capital into developing their current and upcoming leaders. Bersin & Associates' *Leadership Development Factbook 2012: Benchmarks and Trends in U.S. Leadership Development*² estimated that American companies alone spend \$14 billion annually on leadership development. The accumulated evidence seems to be clear that there is consensus that organizations should invest in advancing leadership development. The underlying assumption that guides these investments is that leadership is a capacity you can develop, and you can do so beyond the development that is shaped by an individual's life experiences or genetics, which may also significantly contribute to leadership development.³

The purpose here is to look into the process of 'developing leadership' by using our blueprint that has been developed over the last five years. A blueprint typically illustrates the structural design of what you are attempting to construct in

terms of, say, an office building or house. In our case, the construction project is one's leadership capability.

In the blueprint, we specify there are four levels to focus on to understand and advance an individual's leadership development. As the blueprint illustrates below, leaders first begin by developing their *self-leadership* and then progressively deepen and master *interactive leadership*, then *generative leadership*, and finally *strategic leadership*. Success in building out leadership depends on mastering each of these respective levels of development.

As leadership demands expand over the course of one's career, leaders may briefly need to revisit and further develop self-, interactive or generative processes/structures as part of their development into more sophisticated, strategic roles. These four levels are examined below using two characters that represent leaders with very different trajectories and velocity for development within the blueprint framework.

To illustrate the leadership development blueprint, we will use two fictional leaders called Terry and Kim. We will describe their first person thoughts about the developmental phases and incumbent challenges each has faced. We provide you with a more individualized representation of each of their

¹ I want to extend my appreciation to Chelley Patterson and Diane Vreyens for helping to shape and test this blueprint over the last several years.

² Hedges, K. "If You Think Leadership Development Is A Waste Of Time You May Be Right." Forbes. September 23, 2014. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/work-in-progress/2014/09/23/if-you-think-leadership-development-is-a-waste-of-time-you-may-be-right/#29c017835dcc>.

³ Avolio, B.J. (2011). Pursing authentic leadership development, In N. Nohria, & R. Khurana (eds), *The Handbook of Leadership Theory and Practice*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.; Avolio, B.J., Reichard, R.J., Hannah, S.T., Walumbwa, F.O., & Chan, A. (2009). A meta-analytic review of leadership impact research: Experimental and quasi-experimental studies. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20, 764-784.

mindsets, regarding how they make sense of leading others within each phase of development. We also provide a brief description of each phase followed by what Terry and Kim are experiencing.

Level 1: Self-Leadership: In Figure 1 below, the first level of development, labeled self-leadership, emphasizes connecting your leadership development with your **core values**, creating a **leadership narrative** and building an **authentic foundation**, especially regarding self-awareness. This is where every leadership development intervention should begin. Specifically, if you don't know yourself, you certainly will not have the capacity, bandwidth or motivation to understand and interact with others effectively. Without an authentic, value-driven narrative or story to tell others what you prioritize in your leadership, when you get to *Interactive Leadership* at level 2, it is more likely that your ability to motivate others to pursue a mission will be compromised. For this reason, we place *self-leadership* as the first phase of leadership development.

Blueprint for Sustainable Leadership Development

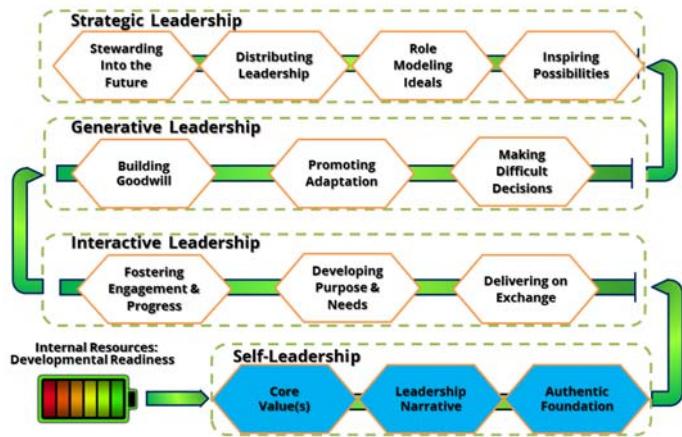


Figure 1: Self-Leadership

At the self-leadership level of development, we begin by focusing on how ready individuals are to assume leadership. We define developmental readiness in terms of one's ability and motivation to engage in leadership development. Readiness, depicted as a battery in Figure 1, represents the

energy for one's development, while also providing energy throughout a lifelong development process.

Developmental Readiness

Assume you are Terry. You are not worried about going to the upcoming new leader orientation session because you believe that when it comes to leading others, “you’ve either got it or you don’t.” You did great in college and have a lot of functional knowledge that has prepared you for this challenge—so you are anxious to start! Still, you find yourself struggling with the pre-work for this session, which asks you to describe how you enter into and demonstrate your leadership with others. Leading feels good to you because you have control over how things get done. Also, the organization picked you to lead, and in your opinion, they must know what makes a good leader.

You have also been asked in advance of the orientation session to list your strengths and weaknesses as a leader. You know that intelligence is your greatest strength, that’s easy. But, in terms of weaknesses, that is not something you have thought a great deal about. In the past, you have been told by some of your former leaders, that you don’t always understand why and how people react to your leadership. This pre-work seems like a waste of time for you. Still, it would be good for you to start to network and meet your “competition.” *Terry just doesn’t seem developmentally ready.*

Now, you are Kim. Despite being new to assuming a leadership role, you have spent time reflecting on what has made you want to step up into a role where you lead others. You are really enjoying the pre-work assignments, which have made you reflect on your role models and experiences that have shaped how you thought one could best lead others. In terms of your list of strengths, people have told you that you connect well with others, that you are organized and open to new ways of doing things. You are still working on self-confidence and challenging others to think more creatively to promote innovation. You absolutely know that you will need help from others to be a more effective leader, and you are eager to learn

how to do so from this program. *Kim appears developmentally ready.*

Core Values ~ Leadership Narrative ~ Authentic Foundation

You are Terry. The exercise you participated in during last week's training session was tough and you weren't sure why they wanted to know your core value before you addressed a series of challenges. There didn't seem to be any clear right or wrong answer for the challenges you were supposed to review, nor how you should make decisions. The whole exercise was confusing, abstract, lacked the step-by-step process that you feel you needed to guide how you lead others. On the positive side, at least you now know the "textbook" answer to what constitutes effective leadership, and the supposed "values" that represent such leadership. If asked, you can certainly repeat what your organization says represents effective leadership.

You felt that one of the participants in the orientation session, named Kim, seemed to have a lot to say about childhood role models and core values. You were surprised how transparent Kim was in talking about prior experiences and how they had shaped Kim's leadership. In your view, Kim needs to realize that we are all under a microscope in this organization, and it doesn't pay to take risks or stand out by being so trustworthy of others. In your judgment, it is always better to fit in and not get noticed by management. *For Terry, self-leadership is still a major work in progress. Terry isn't working to make sense of why leadership matters. For Terry, the ends seem to always justify the means, and it's best to make a quick judgment—be decisive-- and stick with it.*

Now, let's look again at Kim. Kim really enjoyed the core values exercise in last week's training, and had this to say when asked to share: "I feel my best when I am giving to others more than I receive, being transparent and being respectful." You can name a handful of people and experiences that taught and reinforced your ideas about leadership that have shaped your leadership story or

narrative. Of course, earlier in your life, you remembered being a lot more self-oriented, hesitant to be transparent, and sometimes selfish about those you wanted to work with, benefit from and support.

Thinking about your core values was helpful to the training exercise you were given, where you had to work through a series of management challenges with hypothetical employees and customers. Based on living your core values, you could quickly go through the challenges that you were given in this exercise that covered a range of customer service and employee engagement issues. It turns out there was no right or wrong way to examine these issues – other than to have a consistent and meaningful rationale based on your core value, and a good set of questions to ask employees or customers. This exercise also helped you to think about how to respect other trainees in this program, who had different values from yours and how they approached the same challenges. *Kim has a very clear core value and a narrative about how the value came to be so important. Kim demonstrates an authentic foundation through self-awareness, transparency and taking into account others' perspectives.*

Level 2: Interactive Leadership: Having taken the time to build self-leadership by assuming challenging assignments, engaging in reflection, and seeking and absorbing feedback, leaders then focus on mastering the next level in the leadership development blueprint. This second level of development is labeled interactive leadership and focuses on how the leader delivers on the **exchange** with others, developing **purpose**, and fostering **engagement** and **progress**.

Leadership is basically a process by which one individual (or team in the case of shared leadership), influences another person, group, division, company, community, or nation. Interactive leadership is focused on how to consider, enter into and implement work with others to achieve expected and sometimes better than expected performance. When leadership development is optimized we see very effective and

consistent “exchanges.” Leaders who master interactive leadership clarify goals and expectations, recognize the needs and contributions that individuals make, and follow-up on the exchange resulting in relationships with higher levels of engagement, trust, commitment and ownership.

Blueprint for Sustainable Leadership Development

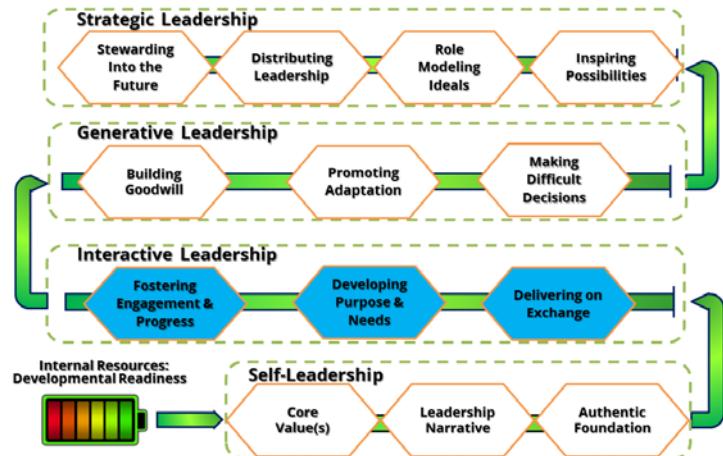


Figure 2: Interactive Leadership

In these exchanges, leaders learn how to develop and communicate a clear purpose for others to align around. They stay present, connected and engaged with the progress followers, peers and their own leaders are making, so that their leadership is transmitted up, down and laterally in the organization in a reliable and effective manner. Unlike *self-leadership*, which is inward facing, *interactive leadership* is outward facing and more noticed by others. However, to master this level, requires a mastery of self-leadership in order to understand how and when others react to “who you are.” At this level, leaders also learn to foster collaboration and build strong teams.

Let’s imagine some time has passed for Terry and Kim. Terry’s mastery of *self-leadership* was incomplete, whereas Kim did master the core aspects of *self-leadership*. Now both have demands on them requiring development and mastery of *interactive leadership*.

Delivering on the Exchange

As Terry, you consider your ambitions, goals and what you can get out of exchanges with followers, peers and others. You assume that others should know what’s expected of them and don’t always clarify up front or commend people when they get it right because this takes too much of your time. You spend more time focusing on what you need from the exchange than on making sure that your requests are clear, understood and fair. You often find yourself wishing you had more competent followers, who were ready to be led. You know you come across as bossy, and that doesn’t bother you because you believe that being a leader means being directive with others. In your view, if staff members do have problems, they should be professional enough to work them out themselves or go to Human Resources for help. You are happy to share your professional and technical expertise – that’s what’s gotten you recognized and what’s responsible for your success.

As Kim, in contrast, you are aware of the importance of making sure your exchanges work reliably in exchange after exchange from one person and team to the next. You think of yourself as a co-owner in communications and assume positive intent even when things go wrong. You set up exchanges so there are check-ins and feedback loops built in, so that concerns can be surfaced, clarifications and corrections can be made, and recognition given when the goal is achieved. You attend to presenting the purpose underlying your work with others, so that they could answer the question, “*Why are we doing this and what needs are being addressed?*” You feel good about knowing that there is mutual respect and people feel safe to come to you with things they don’t understand or don’t feel they should own.

Developing Purpose ~ Fostering Engagement and Progress

As Terry, you find the best approach to leadership is to tell people what you need done and even how to do it, if necessary, so that you get the results you want. If something is really important, you will do it yourself to be sure it is done

right. You don't spend a lot of time on explaining the purpose of the work because that often devolves into questions, delays and excuses. You have tried motivating others by explaining how important the results are for you. When staff or others looked confused about your message, you repeated it. You feel that sometimes people need to hear things a few times before they understand what they are being asked to do. What seems to work best for you is to focus on conveying what your staff will get if they do what they are supposed to do, and what happens if they don't—no more and no less! You know people need structure and so you keep deadlines in sight and provide reminders of due dates. If people fall behind, you remind them that professionals do whatever it takes to get the job done – even if that means working late or over the weekend. You also work hard and have ambitions to reach greater heights by continuing to share your accomplishments with the right decision makers.

As Kim, you realize that most, if not all, of your staff need and want to know why their work matters and what difference it will make to the organization. Sure, they are motivated to do good work to keep their jobs and get their paychecks, but you are not looking to attract and retain people, who don't care about the customer or each other. You've noticed that the periodic meetings you call to talk about the organization's strategy and how your unit's work fits in with the bigger picture, really energizes people. You have even had some great suggestions come out of these interactions with your staff, that you have passed up to your leaders, of course, giving credit to the source! You pay attention to attitudes and morale and look for little ways to recognize people. You feel that it is part of your job to support, train and develop your staff to excel. If it is in your power to remove an obstacle or provide a resource that will help staff excel, you will make that happen. You still take time to reflect on core values as they get challenged, reinforced and augmented by work experiences. Periodically, you find yourself re-telling your leadership narrative adding new lessons. You've come to

realize there is always more to learn and have ideas of what will stretch you further by seeking out opportunities and mentors to develop the skills you will need.

Based on the different approaches shown by Terry and Kim, the level and quality of engagement of the people around them who were involved in the tasks and challenges differed dramatically. Kim's focus on establishing the importance of purpose and addressing needs of others resulted in higher levels of motivation and interest in pursuing the stated objectives. People Kim worked with knew their value and how well they were doing. They received encouragement and support from Kim to keep moving forward as Kim expressed confidence their goals would be met. On the other hand, the engagement level of Terry's followers was largely focused on meeting the goal, getting the reward and moving on to the next deliverable – or to another department with different leadership. Both leaders might achieve similar results in the short run, but the quality of relationships and the basis of goodwill needed for agility, creativity, innovation and growth and more strategic challenges will differ for Terry and Kim based on the level of mastery of *interactive leadership*.

Level 3: Generative Leadership: Once a leader has mastered the core elements of effectively engaging with others, it is then possible to excel at and master generative leadership, which will create the conditions that foster experimentation and support initiatives that challenge current thinking and build capacity for innovation. The key internal resource here is how each leader '*thinks about the way they think*', and aspects of their thinking that must change. If *self-leadership* and *interactive leadership* have not been mastered, leaders will be hard pressed to build the goodwill to promote adaptation and change, while also making difficult decisions that are essential for *generative leadership*.

At this level of development, the leader focuses not only on how to achieve performance standards as a leader, but also how to build a better team, unit, division, organization or

community. The leader takes time to consider how best to make difficult decisions by gathering input from relevant stakeholders. When the leader does make a difficult decision, he/she clearly indicates the criteria used to justify decisions.

Assuming Terry and Kim remain in leadership roles, they will eventually grapple with the demands of generative leadership. We assume that Terry is still lagging behind Kim in terms of the “pre-requisite” mastery of *self-* and *interactive leadership*. What will it be like for them as *generative leadership* demands increase? Let’s have a look through their eyes.

Blueprint for Sustainable Leadership Development

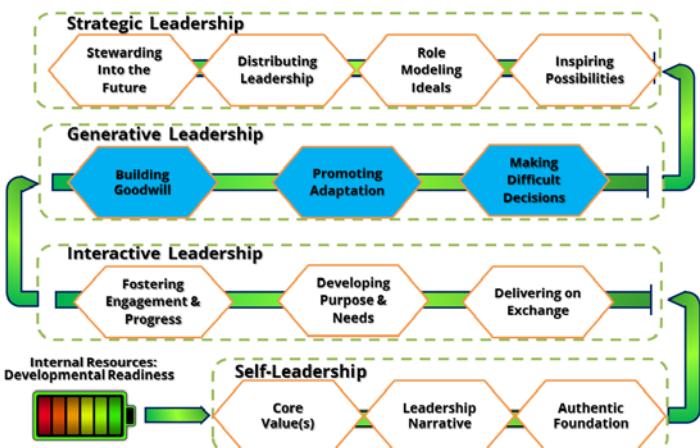


Figure 3: Generative Leadership

Building Goodwill

As Terry, your ambitions and self-promotion are paying off. You know some people have had their doubts along the way about your ability to lead others. Some have claimed that you’re unfair and out to satisfy your own agenda, but this doesn’t dissuade you from forging ahead. Dealing with professional jealousy is just part of the equation if you want to get ahead in life. You recently scored a major coup getting promoted to a coveted director position by making sure your supervisor was aware of the good work you consistently produced for the organization. This new role has a lot of

visibility and could be your ticket to a top leadership position.

Part of your promotion process involved a review of your 360 survey rating results where you, your direct reports, peers and supervisor rated your leadership. Some of the selection committee said they were concerned that your self-ratings – especially on items related to self-awareness and transparency -- were far above your follower and peer ratings – claiming this could be a sign of an inflated self-view. The committee was clear that future success is going to hinge on making improvements in your leadership. This feedback made you realize that you have alienated some people and need to work on relationship building, while also broadening your network of key people across the company to create more strategic alliances for yourself.

As Kim, you are feeling really great about the feedback you received from your 360 ratings. Not only were your self-ratings in agreement with your followers, peers and supervisor, but the comments you received at the end of the feedback report indicated that you were someone who is trustworthy, has a strong and ethical character, is willing to admit mistakes, and makes people who work with you, feel a sense of ownership for their work. You have worked very hard to be a role model for others by taking your own continued development very seriously. It feels good to see this hard work paying off in relationships, respect, trust, and especially business results. The succession of increasingly challenging roles has also kept opportunities for further growth within reach. Most recently you have been asked to step into a director role, managing several units. While this won’t be without its challenges, you are feeling confident and enthused by the support you have felt from the others who will be reporting to you, as well as the VP to whom you will be reporting. All of this support is humbling and you are committed to doing your best to continue to create strong, positive relationships in support of the organization’s goals.

Promoting Adaptation ~ Making Difficult Decisions

As Terry, it feels like it is a big a stretch for you to get your followers to listen to why they must embrace changes the organization is going through. They don't seem to understand that they have created a comfortable status quo for themselves. Your way of compelling them to move on and do something different and innovative is meeting with push back and suspicion. This is really frustrating! There may be some people you will have let go or drive out because they are taking too much of your time.

Leadership is not as difficult with your "inner circle" of followers. You know that the others see these people as your favorites, but you see them as the only people who "get it" and are loyal. You would like to tell them, if everyone could be like this group, being a leader would be a lot easier. For you, it is really frustrating to be challenged by your staff. It feels disrespectful. Lately, with the organization going through change and growth, you have been experiencing more conflicting situations with others and they seem to linger without any satisfactory resolution in sight. As the job gets more stressful, however, you start to have second thoughts about the role you have found yourself in and whether career leadership advancement is a good idea.

As Kim, you are intrigued by the quest for innovation and growth into new arenas that the organization is embracing and the changes this will bring – including a stronger focus on collaboration. It's easy and exciting to get onboard with the new course the senior leadership is plotting, and you oftentimes find yourself revisiting thoughts about your core value and connecting to what seems now like an even larger purpose for your unit and the organization. You have even been re-crafting your message about purpose and refining the vision you communicate to your units. You can see how some of the organization's former assumptions – and your own, too – will potentially get in the way of real change and innovation. You realize you may need to re-think some assumptions and

get others input as your thinking evolves. This is a yet another new chapter in your leadership development and you think back to other times you have been challenged, and had to go through change. Having built a strong and engaged team more than once adds to your confidence, while also helping to trust your followers, peers and others to enable you to test new ideas, assumptions and approaches – and most importantly to try things that might help shift the paradigm of your work.

Terry and Kim have displayed very different degrees of agility and readiness for growth and change as leaders, due to different levels of mastery at the *self-* and *interactive leadership* levels. Terry is not only resistant to adapting to change and growth, but many of Terry's followers have become resistant to Terry's leadership style. Terry's leadership career may not completely derail, but it is likely to be hindered without a return to focusing on developing *self-leadership* and *interactive leadership*.

In contrast, Kim continues to mold, model and articulate a strong sense of purpose and values having already mastered *self-leadership*. This results in Kim being viewed as being open, transparent, fair, and ethical. Kim is able to build the goodwill having already mastered *interactive leadership*. This makes it safer for followers to experiment and innovate in their unit. The positive atmosphere that results in Kim's unit, has created a virtuous cycle, attracting and supporting innovative staff and achieving notable results – this is generative. Kim is likely to get better quality information and more buy in for making difficult decisions because of the engagement capital that has accumulated.

Making difficult decisions for Kim is still hard, but those impacted by the decisions will find Kim's decisions to be impartial and informed. Kim is likely to be increasingly called on to participate in longer term and larger scope strategic decisions for the firm. In contrast, Terry's decisions have lingered for a very long time, and breed mistrust, a lack of respect, conflict, and in many cases, higher turnover. To the

extent that Terry has strong industry, functional or technical expertise along with key internal alliances, strategic leadership opportunities could still be in Terry's future.

Level 4: Strategic Leadership: At this level of leadership development, the leader looks to advance the organization's future narrative by building a plan that guides the direction setting for the organization and how next-generation leaders are developed. More and more of the focus is on indirect leadership, which is transmitted through the folks that work closely with these leaders, and is modeled to the next level on down within the organization.

Let's again look at Terry and Kim:

Blueprint for Sustainable Leadership Development

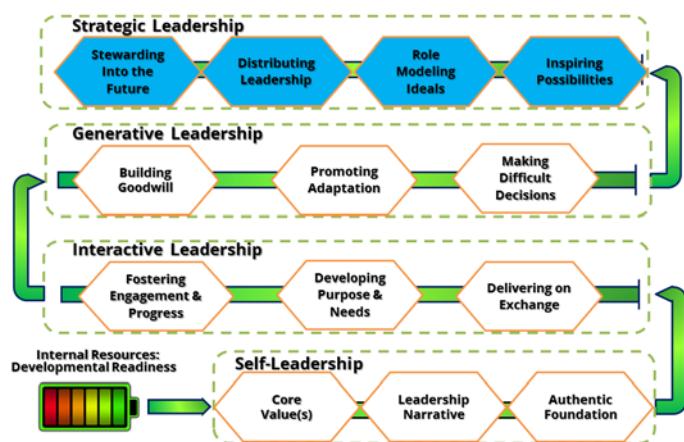


Figure 4: Strategic Leadership

Inspiring Possibilities

Despite attaining a strategic role in the organization after a number of years, as Terry, you often struggle to get your message out to others in the way it was intended. The leaders that work for you seem to convey whatever message they think you are trying to convey, but you hear this laced with reservations and concerns. You feel you have eloquently crafted strategic messages, but they are ignored, rather than igniting the excitement and energy you had hoped for in your leadership role.

As Kim, you start with a general vision of future possibilities and involve others in conversation allowing them to build and elaborate on your ideas, while incorporating how they view their roles and share their expectations. When people don't fully understand your intentions – and this is usually the case in the beginning of the strategy formulation process – followers ask you to help them clarify and communicate that intent accurately. You enjoy this back and forth and verbal testing of strategy. It feels like rapid prototyping of a product. The best thing is when indirect followers – people reporting in a level or two below your direct reports -- identify with these new directions, and even go so far as to express them as 'their own.' The positive feeling that started with your articulation of the mission and why it was important has now become more evident, and you can see the energy growing over time and becoming a coherent sense of collective identity among the people that worked with you.

Role Modeling Ideals

As Terry, you continue to struggle with gaining commitment to the 'new cause' and have had to increasingly use strategies to assure compliance with milestones. You wish there was a greater sense of commitment and identity with the new direction/mission, but until that takes root, you will keep pushing around deadlines and calling people out when they fail to meet the demands or standards. Change is hard and it doesn't happen without a struggle. You will keep hammering at the message in quarterly directors meetings and will continue to ask for updates on how new initiatives are working. It may be necessary to hire a consultant to figure out what's wrong if things don't turn the corner soon.

As Kim, you have been very aware that you need to be visible about your commitment to improving collaborative practices and enacting the new strategy. You are working actively with others on internal communication, hosting town hall meetings to get input, answering questions, and to be out in front searching for ways to sustain the momentum around the

necessary changes. This has meant a lot of work and travel and some personal sacrifices – but you feel this is for the good of others and the mission during a critical time when setting a new direction has to happen both through your words, and also through your actions.

Distributing Leadership ~ Creating the Future

As Terry, you continue to feel that if you really want something done right you have to do it yourself. You have gotten feedback that you are seen as micromanaging. While you know this is a criticism of how you work, you can't seem to let go of the need to keep a close eye on things and review everyone's work. You still trust your "inner circle," which you have come to think of as your "chosen few", to keep driving the message home. You continue to cultivate alliances and think about the ones you should bring into the inner circle.

You recently overheard someone referring to "Terry's Club." While that's concerning on one level, it is reassuring to know that it is clear to others where the power lies, and that there will be consequences if things don't get done according to your plan. There are also people keen to get into this inner circle, so it can't be all that bad! You know most people in power are envied or even disliked and have to be tough skinned to survive. In fact, you have just gotten word that a couple of your circle members are leaving. They couldn't take the stress. There are others you are ready to invite into your club, and expect "survival of the fittest" to prevail.

As Kim, you are happy to know that you can delegate to others and share your influence and accountabilities with a lot of other really talented people. It feels like all the energy you spent working to develop other individuals to assume greater leadership roles has paid off. Indeed, when you reflect on it, you realize that you have always spent a very large portion of your week developing others to do what you can do. Coaching and mentoring your direct and indirect reports remains a priority and something worth taking time every week to do. With all the demands of increasingly responsible

roles, you have had to really protect your time to do this, and you really try hard not to cancel, reschedule or run late to your one-on-one meetings with staff – recalling how that made you feel when it sometimes happened to you. Fortunately, you had good mentors and now you are paying it forward by mentoring others. This truly feels like you are building your legacy.

We have probably all known leaders a bit like Terry and Kim. The Terry's of the world often act in ways that conflict with their message, and could be seen as 'anti role models' without even being aware they come across as being inconsistent with others. These leaders wonder why change initiatives they lead don't take root. They complain there isn't enough time or that there is too much going on to accomplish anything new and innovative – and spend relatively little time thinking about developing others to lead. Leaders like Terry spend most of their time driving others to get the work done, and doing course corrections when people don't meet standards. They invest an increasing amount of time in dealing with others in the moment and can lose sight of other things going on, especially developing the future innovations and organization. They don't deal with others in a constructive way, but rather by driving one task after the other to make sure people stay on track and perform on whatever seems critical in the moment. Followers, in turn, start working reactively, moment-to-moment, unable to plan ahead. Leaders like Terry frequently become more cynical about the future of their organization and their own legacy.

Leaders like Kim, spend a lot of time thinking about the future of the people they work with in terms of development. They are highly motivated to leave '*their people and place*' better than they found it. They are intent and very vocal about developing a sufficient number of leaders to assume the mantel of leadership. Leaders like Kim feel they serve as a steward for others in terms of the legacy of their leadership in their organizations. They think about how the organization will carry on after they move on and want the next generation of leaders to say, "Kim did everything possible to position our

leadership and organization for future success and growth."

Looking Back at Where We Started to Go Forward

The contrast used here comparing Terry and Kim is in reality never that simple. There are more nuances to leadership and its development than reflected in the blueprint and depicted in our scenarios above where we differentiated Kim and Terry. However, the idea of a blueprint that depicts leadership development as progressively building over time and across levels is a useful framework to capture the complexities of leadership development. As with any building project, if the foundation is not properly set or the wiring and plumbing is done improperly, you will likely see problems with the later stages of construction and after occupation. These "cracks" in other parts of the building might not show up for some time, and the root cause (a flawed foundation or faulty wiring) might not always be readily visible.

The blueprint is also useful because it shows a very clear pathway and trajectory from level 1 through to level 4. Again, we recognize that the progression through the levels may not be exactly linear and is usually recursive with the need to revisit and even rework earlier levels when new challenges arise. Kim, for example, might have moved through each level of development in sequence, first with a small project team and then with larger entities. However, when they were promoted to a larger strategic leadership role, they may have returned to self-leadership (level 1 of the blueprint), while trying to understand how to move a hundred people across a region in a single direction as opposed to a team of four people they had contact with every day.

Similarly, when building an authentic foundation (self-leadership level), you may develop some semblance of goodwill (generative leadership level) early on in the trajectory of your leadership development. Or, you may have to make difficult decisions before the foundation of trust and respect is built. What we are suggesting here is that you may not necessarily encounter the four levels of leadership development depicted in the blueprint in lock step fashion,

but we are saying that mastering level 1 will aid mastering level 2, and so on. Thus, being intentional about the sequencing of experiences, challenges and training encountered can help ensure that a leader is building the prerequisite skills, capabilities and repertoire of style options to have a successful end-to-end journey. In designing how we develop or reflect upon our own leadership development, each level and component is relevant.

If you are interested in working on your leadership development, you might want to look at each of the components and levels to decide where you have grown to in terms of your own leadership by addressing the following questions:

1. Are you ready (able and willing) to invest time in learning how you view your leadership?
2. Do you know your most important core value? Do others know it in terms of your transmitting it?
3. What is the first paragraph of your leadership narrative?
4. Have you firmly built each of your pillars in your authentic foundation (self-awareness, transparency, moral/ethical behavior, and balanced processing) and do you have evidence to substantiate that they are strong?
5. How do your employees (customers) judge the quality of their exchanges with you?
6. Do people who work for you feel a sense of inner purpose that is engaging?
7. Are you able to reinforce and motivate movement towards improving the way you work together with your colleagues? Do they feel the momentum?
8. Are you able to make difficult decisions and feel trusted afterwards?

9. When you introduced the last major change in your team, unit or organization, did you receive a lot of resistance?
10. Can you call upon people you work with or for to get help, to support , where you are heading or at least to suspend judgment before concluding something won't work?
11. Are your people afraid to explore or are they energized by your calls to try new ventures?
12. Do you see people who may not have worked directly with you modeling and expressing what you have said is important in terms of your leadership of them?
13. Can you entrust those who work for you to assume increasingly more responsibilities for leading?
14. When you're sitting down to paint a view of the possibilities that await your organization, are the leaders who work for you ready to pick up a brush and add to the picture, or pick up a roller to cover it up as if it will never happen?