

Action Learning and Its Impact on Leadership Development in a VUCA World

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VUCA and Impact on:

- Organizations – Complexity and continuous adaptation, restructuring and learning; requires learning organizations
- Teams – Constant flux of membership, location, expectation, and leadership; criticality for organizational survival; requires high performing, learning teams
- Individuals/Self/Leaders – New roles and expectations; requires paradigmatic shifts in leadership and leaders
- Problem-solving - More urgent, complex, “wicked”; requires the ability of breakthrough solving while evolving

Action Learning – The Perfect Tool for Leading in the VUCA Environment

- Enables the leader to optimally lead (1) organizations, (2) teams, (3) and individuals while engaged in (4) problem-solving
- Develops all the skills that a leader needs to lead in the VUCA environment

New and Reshaped Leadership Skills Needed in all 4 Situations

1. Organizations
2. Teams
3. Individuals and Self
4. Problem-Solving

Learning Organization



Organizations



- Leadership to build learning organizations
- Building a learning culture
- Encourage continuous learning at individual, group and organizational levels
- Changing the vision, purpose, and structure of the organization
- Engage individuals and organizations inside and outside the business chain
- Creating, storing, transferring and applying knowledge
- Leadership Skills: Vision-building, systems-thinking, decisiveness, courage, collaboration, learning, service orientation, dealing with ambiguity, persistence, asking questions

Teams

- Great teams achieve their objectives in a supportive environment while continuously LEARNING
- Link and leverage internal and external systems
- Diversity and yet quickly high-performing
- Leadership Skills: Team building, flexible, openness, patience, learning, trust, respect, collaboration, asking questions

Individuals and Self

- Enable everyone in the organization and on the team to continuously learn by reflecting on experience
- Move from telling to asking/listening/reflecting/learning mode
- Leadership vs. Leader
- Leadership Skills: Courage, integrity, self-awareness, humility, building trust, patience, asking questions

Problem-Solving

- Complexity of “wicked” problems
- Requires a learning team with diversity of perspectives who can challenge assumptions
- Need to get to the root of problem and search for breakthrough solutions
- Use systems-thinking rather than linear thinking
- Leadership Skills: Critical thinking, patience, collaboration, creativity, systems thinking, asking questions, respectful of diverse views

Leadership Competencies in the VUCA World

Accountability	Respect Diverse Views	Humility	Patience	Listening
Consensus/Team Building	Learning	Curiosity	Critical Thinking	Decisiveness
Fully Present	Creativity and Innovation	Systems Thinking	Integrity and Honesty	Negotiation
Service and Stewardship	Visioning	Collaboration	Inclusiveness	Asking Great Questions
Succinct clear Responses	Provide Support to Others	Agility and Flexibility	Building Trust	Dealing with Ambiguity

Asking Questions is the single best methodology to develop the VUCA leadership skills

Become a better listener and communicator

Build greater self-awareness and humility

Become a better team member and leader

Courage and authenticity

Continuous learning and improvement

Systems-thinking and creativity

Patience

Respect for others

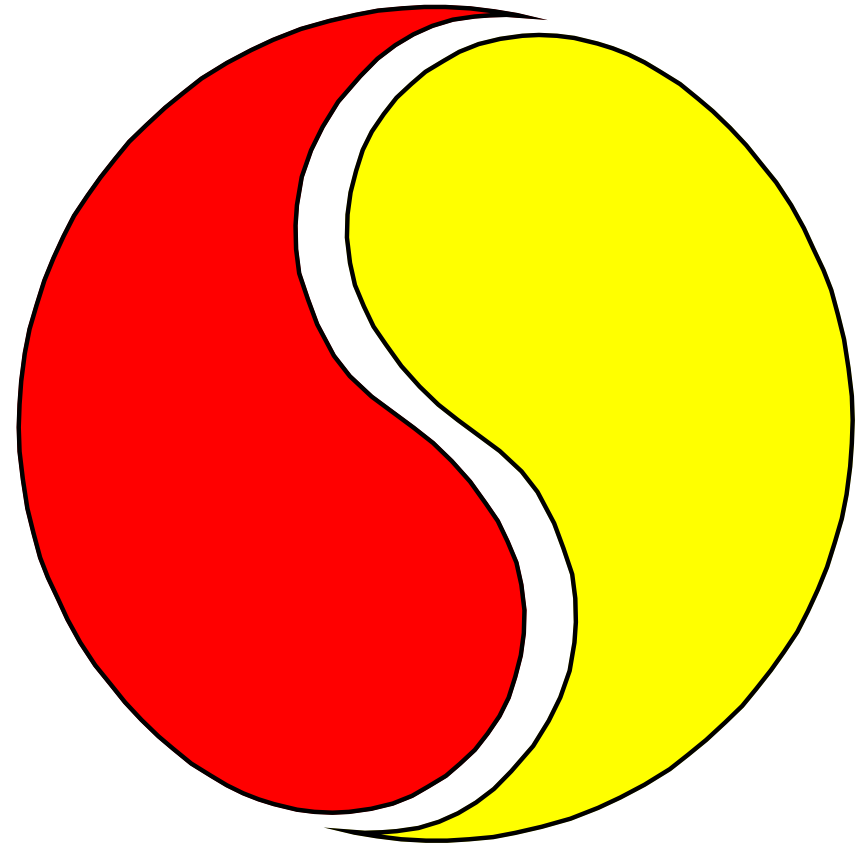
Building and sharing visions

Every Leadership Skill
can be developed, practiced and
demonstrated in every action learning
session

WHY? Working on a complex problem and
seeking breakthrough solutions with a
group while no one has the answer

What is Action Learning?

- A **process** that involves a small group working on real problems, taking action, and learning while doing so
- A powerful management **tool** that creates dynamic opportunities for individuals, teams, leaders and organizations to successfully learn and innovate
- Learning during, after and before actions



Components of an Action Learning Program

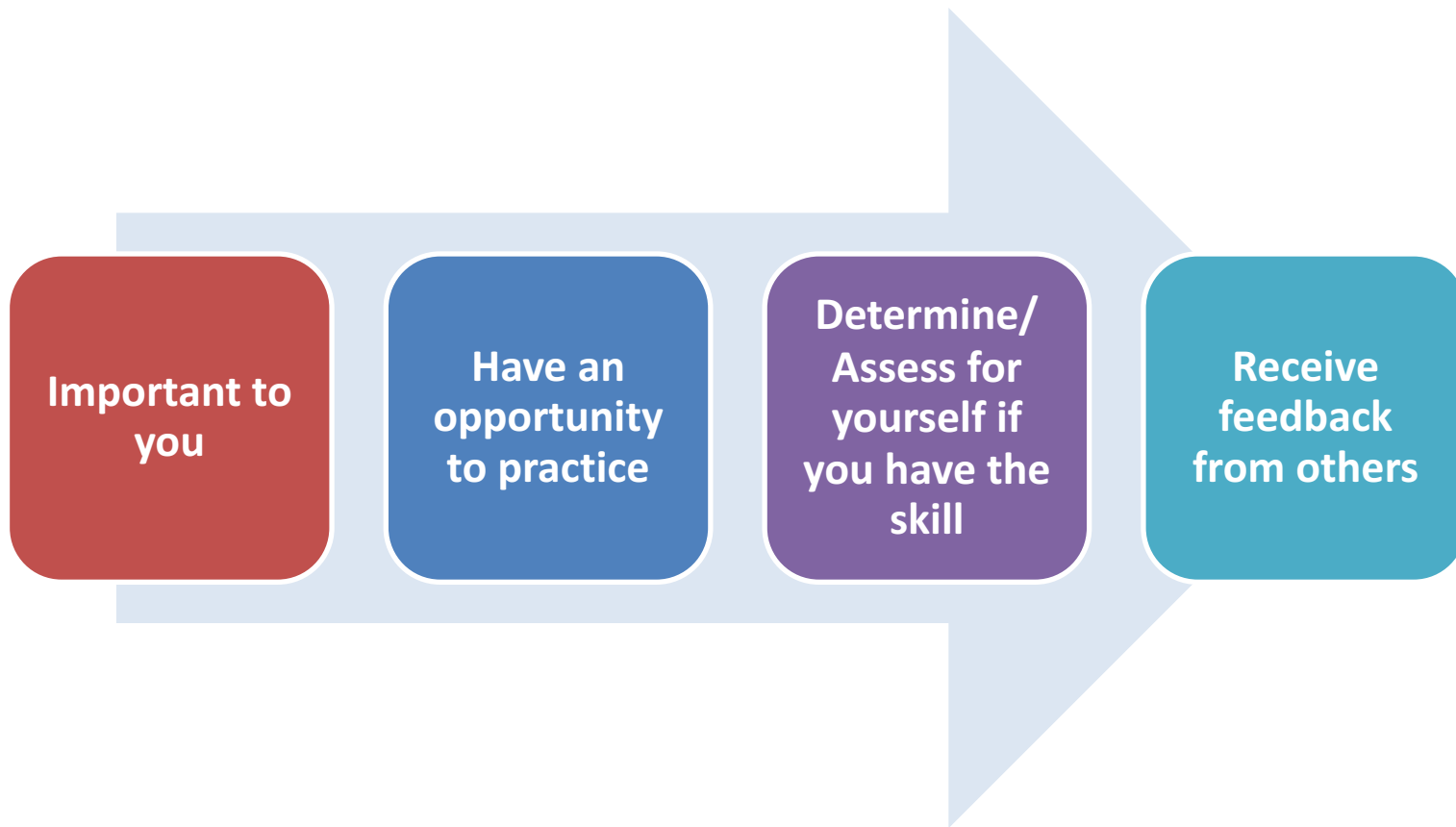
- ❶ Project, challenge, task, or problem
- ❷ Group of 4-8 people with diverse perspectives
- ❸ Reflective questioning and listening
- ❹ Development of systemic strategies and implementation of agreed-to actions
- ❺ Commitment to learning
- ❻ Action Learning coach



5. Three Levels of Learning



Four Components Necessary to Develop a Leadership Skill



Session Start

1

Select Skill

- Each participant commits to developing a specific skill

2

Post Skills

- All skills posted for all to see

3

Look for Skill

- Coach informs team they will each be asked how they did with their own skill and when they observed others demonstrating

Mid Session

1

Observe

- Note when a participant performs the behavioral skill they selected

2

Learning

- If something particularly poignant happens in relation to the skill – pose the question

End Session

1

Individual

- Asked for examples of using their skill

2

Team

- Asked when they observed the skill being used

3

Coach

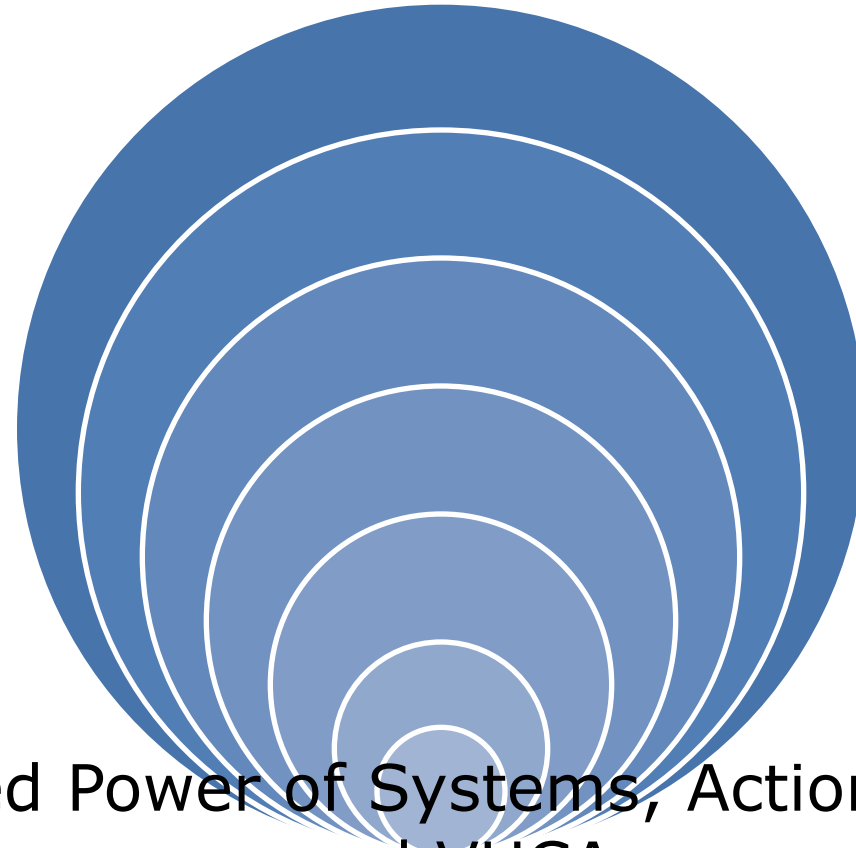
- Ask how this could be used outside the session

What leadership skills are most critical for each of the factors of the VUCA environment?

Let's explore how an action learning member could demonstrate these?

- Volatility
- Uncertainty
- Complexity
- Ambiguity

Leadership Development in VUCA Times



Combined Power of Systems, Action Learning
and VUCA



Questions, Learnings, & Ideas