The 4E's Leadership Framework

The 4E's Leadership Framework is a practical Leadership process built around four organizing activities – Envision, Enable, Empower and Energize. It integrates strategic planning with Leadership development, and provides both measurement and a personal improvement process.

The 4E's are contingent, in that the activities within the Framework can be modified to exactly meet the needs of a specific Enterprise. There are two axes - for operational and organizational aspects. Individuals and multifunctional teams can use the Framework, underlining its scaleability.
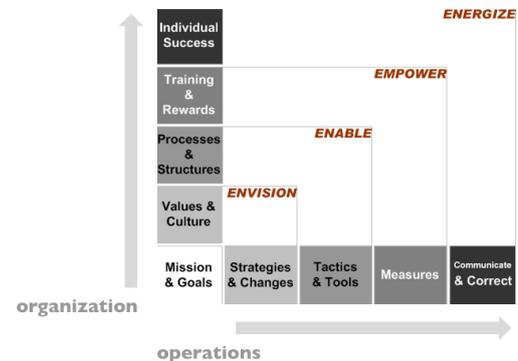

Leadership

Leadership is a multifaceted process, not an abstract concept. Effective Leadership is all about change (Kotter, 1990) combining action, people and organizational skills (Fiedler, 1967; Hosking, 1988). Leadership is a process (Bass, 1978) and it can be learnt (Grint, 1995). Leaders and Followers are inseparable (Burns, 1978), and Leadership is a values-driven activity (Gardner, 1990; Heifertz, 1994).

The Leadership process requires clear vision, an effective (and up to date) tool kit, the right organizational structure, and empowered and energized people. Leaders and Followers must share a common set of values and beliefs. And the complexity faced today suggests that Leadership must be distributed through the enterprise, depending on the issue, challenge or knowledge at hand.

- o   Leadership requires values congruence between all of the players
- o   Leaders and Followers are interdependent – you can't have one without the other
- o   Leadership is a process, not a one-off event
- o   Leadership is about successfully handling complexity – good decisions simplify things
- o   Leadership and change are synonymous – Leaders innovate
- o   Leadership is a teachable process, and can thus be measured

What, how and why

The 4E's is focused on "actions in use" rather than "espoused" competencies, personal style or behaviours. The first three Es are the collective "what" and "how", whilst the last E is the individual "why", for the Leader and the team. It has proven successful in personal general and divisional management experience across the world, with non-profits and in consulting engagements.
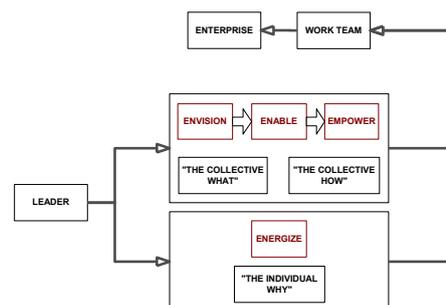
It has two dimensions – organizational (people) and operational (task) - and is a sequential process:

- ▪ **Envision** the future, using the vast array of insights available from Big Data.
- ▪ **Enable** the enterprise, with strategies, technologies and systems to create action on this insight.
- ▪ **Empower** individuals, to organize effectively, to innovate, deliver results and drive value.
- ▪ **Energize** everyone in the team consistently and constantly, and course correct as needed.

Data from thousands of 4E's self-assessments has also been evaluated, providing evidence of validity, as well as offering insights on Leadership self-perceptions across the world.

Envision
A robust view of the external world drives the formation of the mission, and builds clear goals. Leader and Follower must share coherent values to provide a solid foundation. It is helpful to distinguish between verbal objectives (O - the mission), and numerical objectives (G - the goals) and between strategies (S - choices of what

to do and what not to do) and measurement (M – essential to progress) in an OGSM format. The time sequence of activities must also be clear, and is often the cause of failure.

Enable
The best enabling mechanisms are built on innovation. The first type (on the "Operational" axis) includes tools, technologies, and business methodologies. "A better mouse trap" is a good mechanism to bring about change. The second set of enablers (on the "Organizational" axis) includes processes and structure. It also requires ensuring that the right people and the right skill sets are in place to get the job done, building towards interdependence across the functions and geographies of the enterprise.

Empower
The Leader has a contract with his or her Followers, for mutual success and failure, reward and sanction - so the two are interdependent. Both sides are given freedom, yet held jointly accountable. On the "Organizational" axis, the team needs the training to get the job done. Empowerment must also bring rewards, and sanctions or challenges for improvement. On the "Operational" axis, Leaders and Followers must measure progress, which encourages dialog and continuous improvement.

Energize
On the "Organizational" axis, the maximum energy will result from the combination of winning (in the marketplace) and achieving a sense of personal success and satisfaction. This requires clarity of purpose. The more energy the team generates, the more energy the Leader has – in a virtuous circle of reinforcement. On the "Operational" axis, continuous communication and course corrections are key. This includes "walking the talk" and having a clear, truthful and persuasive "Leadership story". The Leader (and the Leadership team) is the motor for change, providing energy to the entire organization.

Self-assessment

The 4E's can been crafted into a set of "Leadership Standards" which can also be tailored to a specific organization. The subsequent self-assessment has practical diagnostic capability for individuals and teams.
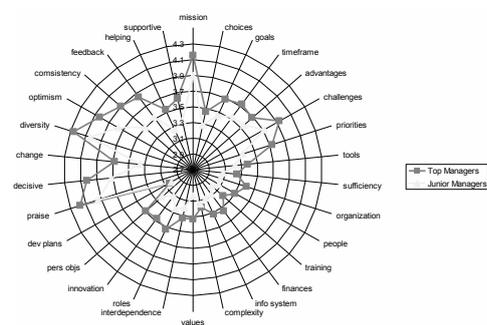
As well as looking at individual Leadership performance against these standards, the data can be presented to show an organizational "shape" to facilitate dialog and learning. Global scores for "Enabling" are often below the other E's, suggesting a relative dearth of tools and processes. By contrast, "Envisioning" is assessed uniformly strongly across the globe, whilst "Empowerment" varies by geography. Younger people (19-25) score higher across the board than people already in business – whilst junior managers have lower scores throughout. Middle Managers feel less "Empowered" than others – reality sets in?

This analysis and observation of business Leaders suggests a personal Leadership development journey.

o   Learning the necessary skills (Envisioning the strategies and choosing Enabling tactics)
o   Exhibiting Leadership behaviours (including Empowering)
o   Getting comfortable with the Leadership role (and Energizing others)

The 4E's Framework can be used over time to self-improve. Leaders may be able to demonstrate to others that they understand the theory and even know some of what to do – but they need to be at ease with their role.

Leadership Development Process

The approach taken is to interactively educate the senior Leadership team on the 4E's Leadership Framework, blend that practically into the business strategy (often using the OGSM approach) to embed Leadership into the "way of doing business". The initial workshops enrol the team as "Leaders developing Leaders", and explore how to apply this as best practice in managing a complex global enterprise.

4E's foundation, self-assessment, top team enrolment	Leadership Standards, Connect to strategy (OGSM)	Leaders develop Leaders (global roll out)	Embed people systems, measure & reward
ENVISION	ENABLE	EMPOWER	ENERGIZE

The 4E's forms the basis for creating consistent Leadership Standards, used across the organization to train, assess and performance manage. In the subsequent roll out, senior Leaders will be fundamental to the program – there is no more powerful way of having a Leadership program embedded than having ''Leaders develop Leaders''.

Change Leadership

Kotter, in ''Leading Change'' (1996), uses change to drive a clear distinction between Management and Leadership.. Research (Oxford, HEC) shows that the 4E's lends itself well to a coherent 11-point change program.

1. Envision
- an accepted need for change
- a viable vision of an alternative state

2. Enable
- change agents in place – with a guiding coalition
- sponsorship from above
- realistic scale & pace of change – with sense of urgency
- an integrated transition programme

3. Empower
- organization shape to show how tasks and people fit
- a symbolic end to the status quo
- a plan for likely resistance

4. Energize
- constant advocacy – maintain momentum of change
- a locally owned benefits plan

Global Leadership

In related work (see Linkage's Best Practice in Leadership Development, ''Developing Leaders in a Global Landscape'', 2009), there are four areas of focus today in running an effective global organization: Distributed Leadership, Loose-Tight Innovation, Networks of Trust and Strategic Engagement.

Distributed Leadership means moving Leadership responsibility around the organization depending on the need, expertise and opportunity, rather than have it positionally fixed in a frozen structure. **Loose-Tight Innovation** is about broadening global access to information and best practice, whilst simultaneously driving down responsibility as far as possible. **Networks of Trust** within an Enterprise are the key to getting things done, rather than reliance on the organization chart. Dramatic progress is being made in understanding network science, which can inform how best to organize this. **Strategic Engagement** is the measurable extent to which employees are aligned with and emotionally attuned to the values, goals, strategies and tactics of the Enterprise.

The 4E's Leadership Framework can be overlaid on these global imperatives to yield a robust Leadership process.

	Envision	Enable	Empower	Energize
Distributed Leadership	Common values Common purpose Integrate paradoxes	Roles & responsibilities Decision processes	Training & Development Delegation of authority	''Action Learning'' Minimum layering
Loose-Tight Innovation	Knowledge sharing Networks of Innovation	Success Models Local Innovation	Reward innovation	Encourage change Technology
Networks Of Trust	Collective Purpose	Searchability Member Identities	Communities of Excellence	Actionability
Strategic Engagement	Global / local knowledge Customer understanding Technology impact	Common systems Common work-culture OGSM	Integrated Goal Setting Feedback systems	Communication to all Facilitate ''Walk the Talk''

"Leadership is the energetic process of getting other people fully and willingly committed to a new and sustainable course of action, to meet commonly agreed objectives whilst having commonly held values"

LeaderValues offers workshops, assessments, organization & strategy development tools and programs built on the 4E's.