Strategic Leadership Tools

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**The Unconventional Power of Strategic Leadership Tools**

**Develop Adaptive Organizations**

**Organization facts:**

- Most organizations find it challenging to adapt to the rapid pace of change *even though it is critical survival skill*
- Most employees may have strong technical/professional skills; *few know how to systematically implement new initiatives and projects. That is why 70-90% fail*
- Leadership work has to be effectively extended to the management ranks. *Most leadership/employee development programs don’t reach the people who need it the most*
- There are wonderful organization tools to grow the business—*few are used*
- The use of new and common language among all employees is critical to reduce silos and improve organization performance—*yet most new initiatives don’t stick*
- Unless people quickly see the value in the learning...*they will not use and lose it*

**What can Strategic Leadership Tools do for your organization?**

Most leaders are overwhelmed by their workload and the pace of change. They often find it difficult to achieve the buy-in and support from others. Strategic Leadership Tools provides both the tools and the forum in which to bring together a larger group of people from many organization levels to accomplish adaptive work. It facilitates cross-silo communication and cooperation to make change as quickly and easily as possible. Increasing the capacity to undertake higher level leadership challenges creates organizations that are more nimble and adaptable to unexpected external changes in the marketplace.

Strategic Leadership Tools includes a map to guide leader work. For each of the five stops on the map, there are a wide range of proven, practical and powerful tools to address the common and predictable issues experienced when implementing change. Participants apply the learning to existing organization issues and develop solutions and action plans.
The benefits of Strategic Leadership Tools: Versatility

Strategic  Provides a framework to accomplish the organization’s most important work

Culture changing  Engages people across historical organization boundaries to work together to create a sustainable competitive advantage

Team building  Streamlines the ability of diverse groups to work together

Leadership development  Provides a cost-effective way to enhance leadership talent at multiple organization levels

Action learning  Promotes communities of practice

Coaching  Creates additional options for coaches and organization development personnel

Measurement  We determine the expected outcomes…and measure performance

When is Strategic Leadership Tools appropriate?

The Toolbox is best applied to significant organization issues. Examples include:

- Anticipate/adapt to changes in the marketplace
- Accomplish business objectives that require higher level leadership skills
- Redefine functions/departments that need to readjust their purpose/mission
- Engage people to work more collaboratively across organization boundaries
- Cross-functional teams have to address new/more complex work
- Leadership talent needs to be improved to address new organization challenges
- Functional units (e.g. HR, Finance, or specific divisions) must re-invent themselves
- When implementing new programs such as Balanced Scorecard and Lean
- Further develop leadership talent
How does Strategic Leadership Tools work?

The Strategic Leadership Tools is a simulation in which participants experience typical leadership issues. They are asked to apply the learning from the program to address those challenges. The length of the training ranges from one to three days and is dependent on the number of tools presented. Existing organization leadership tools can easily be incorporated into the program. Participants are then assigned existing organization issues and expected to work in teams to address them using the new learning. Further on-line, on-demand video instruction, written explanation, worksheets, and quizzes are available. Instruction can take place virtually.

A design team comprised of an HR person and other leaders

- Determines the scope and mission for the project
- The tools that are to go into the “box”
- The target audience
- The subsequent projects and composition of the groups that will address them
- Provides some internal coaching to assure that the project teams stay on course

Difference between conventional methods

We see leadership as a critical organization function which has specific deliverables and can be measured. We believe that many people can share in the leadership responsibilities because it is a repeatable, improvable, teachable, and measurable process. Applying tools from some of the foremost organizational thinkers to critical organization problems builds the capacity of the organization to compete in the marketplace. When people from all parts of the organization share common language, tools, and methods to accomplish this work, it creates a network of people who more easily share ideas and concerns.

Underlying Learning principles

Most leadership development approaches are based on identifying strengths and weaknesses or assessing personality styles and providing methods to improve them. Not only are these approaches more expensive, unfortunately, research demonstrates that they are not how most adults learn to improve their performance. Instead, we believe a more powerful approach includes carefully designed experiences and structure using the Five As Framework* as the model.
## Five A’s Leadership Development Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>How we apply</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alignment</strong></td>
<td>Align learning with strategic goals.</td>
<td>• Participants work on leadership and strategic issues identified by senior leaders as critical to the organization’s success. This serves as a learning framework/container&lt;br&gt;• Participants are taught how to move away from less important work and learn how to more effectively undertake the types of work that will lead to greater organization adaptability&lt;br&gt;• We can link our language, processes, and tools into existing Human Resources talent management programs</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Anticipation</strong></td>
<td>Anticipate success.</td>
<td>• As part of the process, participants determine at the front end what success will look like&lt;br&gt;• Each team receives coaching from an internal and Toolbox coach who work together to ensure that the Toolbox teams have the support they need to be successful</td>
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<td><strong>Alliance</strong></td>
<td>Create a learning alliance between learner and boss.</td>
<td>• Senior leaders take an active part in helping to plan and implement the leadership development aspects of the program&lt;br&gt;• We closely partner with internal leaders to ensure that all critical success and cultural factors are carefully aligned</td>
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<td><strong>Application</strong></td>
<td>Apply learning immediately.</td>
<td>• Participants typically work in areas in areas outside their prior education and experience so they must incorporate the learning in order to gain a successful result&lt;br&gt;• Participants can apply the learning to their own situations and thus see immediate value from utilizing the learning</td>
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<td><strong>Accountability</strong></td>
<td>Hold learner and organization accountable for business results.</td>
<td>• Each team is expected to present their results to a specially the leadership team which creates a sense of urgency and public accountability&lt;br&gt;• The Leader’s Toolbox and the internal design team hold themselves accountable by evaluating the percentage of Toolbox Team projects accepted by the leadership team&lt;br&gt;• We can implement pre-post learning measurement. The Leader’s Toolbox provides a refund if the approach fails to deliver results</td>
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*Stephen Gill & Sean Murray, *Getting more from your training investment: The Five As Framework*
### Comparison of conventional approaches with Strategic Leadership Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Conventional leadership development/ change management programs</th>
<th>Strategic Leadership Tools</th>
<th>So What?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Primarily top layers</td>
<td>Middle management through top management</td>
<td>Simplifies strategic execution</td>
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<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Improve individual leader capabilities</td>
<td>Create network of effective leaders</td>
<td>Reduces organization silos and resistance to change, streamlines communication,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>A few limited models or tools</td>
<td>Broad range of practical tools necessary to implement new business initiatives—provide everyone with similar tools/methods/language</td>
<td>Less expensive, more efficient, comprehensive set of skills/tools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Indirect relationship to business performance</td>
<td>Direct relationship to business improvement and performance</td>
<td>Better:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Decision-making</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Cross-silo teamwork</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Levels of engagement</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Speed to action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Customized platform</td>
<td>Common platform</td>
<td>Less cost/Guarantied ROI</td>
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<td>Speed</td>
<td>Takes long time—if ever</td>
<td>Almost immediate</td>
<td>Becomes self-reinforcing</td>
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### Who is The Leader’s Toolbox?

Through training, coaching, and consulting The Leader’s Toolbox provides leadership, innovation, and change tools and coaching to help people successfully accomplish complex work—together. We help organizations determine the core issues, create new possibilities, and implement solutions that stick. Rather than rely on external consultants to develop one-time answers, we provide the foundation for internal personnel to continually address a multitude of issues.

Our work has been nationally recognized. Leadership Excellence Magazine ranked our work in the top ten best leadership development coaches and consultants for five years. Executive Excellence placed us on their website as one of the top ten best leadership development practices. Leading for a Change: How to Master the Five Challenges Faced by Every Leader was noted by mgeneral.com as one of the best business books in 2000.