

YOU CAN'T
KNOW
IT ALL

LEADING IN THE AGE
OF DEEP EXPERTISE

WANDA T. WALLACE

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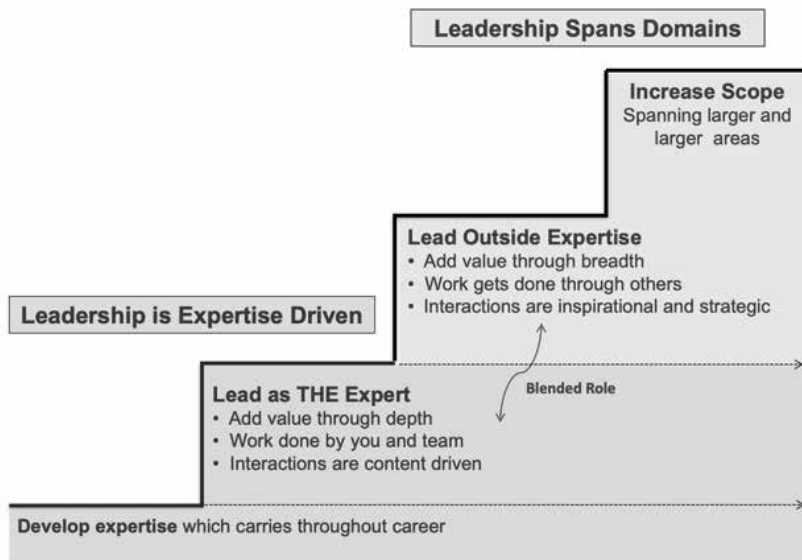
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	1 My leader- ship role calls for me to do this.	2 I am good at this.	3 I aspire to do more of this.	4 My leader- ship role calls for me to do this.	5 I am good at this.	6 I aspire to do more of this.
Having a strong focus on protecting the organization from internal or external harm—for example, preventing missteps or breakdowns or dealing with financial, legal, reputational, or other threats						
Having knowledge that no one else has						
Taking time to understand and provide input on how people in other parts of the organization see problems and opportunities that are not directly related to my work						
Making bold moves and taking risks to improve the company's growth						
Expanding and valuing the <i>wisdom of depth</i> —seeking a deeper understanding of my field						
Defining the value I add by the problems I personally solve or can teach my team to solve						

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Taking a broader view of the entire company; understanding such things as market share, growth, competition, barriers to entry, pricing, where the business makes the most money, and which products are most important						
Trusting others to handle details better than I can						
Preferring to be hands-on on tasks, even if I delegate						
Preferring to connect with people through the content I know						
Expanding and valuing the <i>wisdom of breadth</i> —a holistic understanding of the company and the market, across functions and lines of business						
Knowing just enough detail but not needing a great deal of depth to feel comfortable making decisions						
Trusting myself to do the work more accurately and more quickly than others						
Presenting my area's viewpoint but leaving it to the top leaders to decide how much weight to give that viewpoint						

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Defining the value I add by how I enable the organization to solve problems collectively						
Building trust by strengthening common ground with others						
Spending the vast majority of my time with people in my specialty area or who rely on my knowledge in their day-to-day work						
Knowing the details, having the right answer						
Relying on others' knowledge and abilities rather than my own						
Helping others build spanning networks consisting of people who can serve as thinking partners, mentors, role models, and allies						
Being at the hub of activity, having all information and discussion flowing through me for final decisions						
Spending time concentrating on my work without interruption						

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Using my extended network to verify the team's insight or to gather additional perspective						
Being patient in dealing with people whose interests, language, or style is very different from mine						
Preferring to have time to dig into the work, to roll up my sleeves, to concentrate						
Having a bias toward perfection—producing work that is as perfect as possible, without compromise						
Bias toward deciding as quickly as is feasible, knowing that a decision helps get the organization moving ahead—even if the decision isn't perfectly informed						
Seeing the value in, and feeling comfortable with, expedient compromises that get things moving						

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Bias toward refraining from making decisions until all the data are in						
Maintaining a network of experts in my field who share common perspectives and a common language						
Being comfortable saying I don't know, or admitting my limitations						
Maintaining a large network that includes people from different areas of expertise and different interests						
Preferring to influence people through logic, analysis, and detailed facts						
Building trust through the credibility of my experience and knowledge						
Using my understanding of what matters to others to influence them						
Creating followership through my ability to inspire people						
Preferring to take emotion out of conversations in favor of facts and logic						
Preferring to take time to be precise in favor of just getting things moving in the right direction						

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Appreciating the importance of how I present myself for getting decisions made						
Recognizing, taking time to understand, and incorporating how people feel about my communication						
Totals						
Averages (Total/20)						

What Does It Mean?

Using the average at the bottom of Column 1, complete this sentence:

MY ROLE HAS AN AVERAGE LEVEL OF ____ ON EXPERT LEADERSHIP.

If the number is above 4, then the job has a large component of expert leadership. If below 3, then not so much.

Using the Column 4 average, complete this one:

MY ROLE HAS AN AVERAGE LEVEL OF ____ ON SPANNING LEADERSHIP.

Now for capabilities: Using the Column 2 average, finish this sentence:

IN MY VIEW, I SCORE AN AVERAGE OF _____ ON THE CAPABILITIES OF AN EXPERT LEADER.

A number above 4 suggests you think you're pretty good at the E-leader aspects of your present job; below 3 says the opposite.

Using the Column 5 average, fill in this one:

IN MY VIEW, I SCORE AN AVERAGE OF _____ ON THE CAPABILITIES OF A SPANNING LEADER.

As for what you enjoy doing: Using the Column 3 average, complete this:

I SCORE AN AVERAGE OF _____ ON LIKING THE WORK OF AN EXPERT LEADER.

And, using the Column 6 average, finish this one:

I SCORE AN AVERAGE OF _____ ON LIKING THE WORK OF A SPANNING LEADER.

These sentences should provide at least a rough sense of what the company relies on you to provide, how well you feel you're providing it (note that it tells you nothing about how well your boss and company think you're doing), and whether the responsibilities resonate with you. The question now is: What do you do with this information?

Gaining Insight from Competitor Analysis

Area of Inquiry	Key Questions	Advantages	Disadvantages	Conclusions and Insight
State of the organization	<p>What infrastructure exists?</p> <p>What infrastructure changes are being made and why?</p> <p>How profitable is the business? Where is the primary revenue derived?</p>			
The firm in the environment	<p>What is the chain of activities in the firm? What is the value chain for the customer?</p> <p>What strategic alliances and partnerships exist?</p>			
Assets and capabilities	<p>What tangible assets exist?</p> <p>What intangible assets exist (brand, relationships, knowledge, human capital)?</p> <p>What capabilities or competencies exist (technical, manufacturing, human)?</p> <p>What technology is available?</p>			

Area of Inquiry	Key Questions	Advantages	Disadvantages	Conclusions and Insight
Mind-set	What assumptions exist about the customer? The marketplace? The firm? Competitors? Technology? Future scenarios? Capabilities?			
Strategy	What does the above information indicate about the firm's current strategy? What does it indicate about potential future strategies? What implications does it hold for you?			

[Adapted from Liam Fahey, *Competitors: Outwitting, Outmaneuvering, and Outperforming* [Wiley, 1998]]

The table below contrasts the two ways of looking at the world.

Instructing, Expert Mind-set	Enabling, Spanning Mind-set
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know what to do. • I provide answers or structure. • If people do what I say, we will have a good outcome. • I add value by knowing what to do. • I am respected because I know what to do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are multiple approaches that lead to the same outcome. • I do not know exactly what to do, but I know what the organization needs. • I encourage people to think and to stretch themselves. • I have time to guide; this is on my primary agenda. • I add value by enabling others. • I am respected because I can involve and inspire others.

These different mind-sets lead managers to ask different types of questions when things go wrong.

The Instructing, Expert Mind-set Asks:	The Enabling, Spanning Mind-set Asks:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did this happen? • What wasn't understood? • What did we miss? • The questions conclude with the direction: "This is what needs to be done next time." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What possibilities does this create? • How else could you frame the situation? • How will you ensure that you stay on track? • What have we learned from this? • Who else needs to be consulted? • Who else has an opinion that should be considered? • The questions conclude with: "What do you want to do differently next time?"

Questions to diagnose the problem:

- What's happened?
- How do we know?
- Where have we seen something similar in the past?
- What are we not seeing?
- What do we do?

Questions to encourage strategic thinking:

- What have we learned from past experiences?
- What are the best options?
- What are the risks?
- How will change happen?
- Who has a role in this?
- What resources do we need to succeed? Do we have them?
- How will we measure progress?

Questions that build empathy:

- What is your experience?
- What do you believe to be true?
- What are you feeling/thinking?
- What are you most concerned about?
- What do you mean? Tell me more.

Questions that clarify mission and purpose:

- What do you care about? What worries you most?
- What do you want to build?
- What could we do?
- What are your principles or values?
- What do we need to consider in making a decision?
- What can others/I contribute?
- How bold can we be?

Exercise on Coaching: Start a meeting with your direct report by asking the following set of questions in this sequence:

- What is on your mind? And what else? And what else?
- What have you tried? What haven't you tried?
- Why do you think you are getting the results you have seen thus far?
- What do you want from me?
- What have you learned?

(Adapted from Michael Bungay Stanier, *The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More and Change the Way You Lead Forever* [Box of Crayons Press, 2016])

Delegating and organizing go hand in hand. I believe you can get anyone to do part of any task if you break down the

An old but useful tool is a two-by-two matrix of task importance versus task urgency.

More urgent		
Less urgent		
	Less important	More important

A similar matrix is effort versus payoff.

High payoff		
Low payoff		
	High effort	Less effort

Detail-oriented Style	Big Picture-oriented Style
Introverted —prefers time to think before speaking, gets energy from turning inward first	Extroverted —prefers to talk in order to know what he or she thinks, prefers engaging the world first
Inclusive —includes lots of people	Selective —very selective in who is included
Open —prefers to share openly	Reserved —prefers to not share a great deal
Structured —prefers working in a systematic, ordered way	Open-ended —prefers exploring, seeing what emerges
Analytical, critical —when engaged in a topic, is very logical and challenging	Sensitive to people's reactions —when engaged in a topic, is careful with words so as not to offend
In control, deciding —prefers being in control and making decisions	Letting others decide —prefers letting others make decisions for themselves
Rule-breaking —sees the rules as guidelines and will challenge rules	Rule-following —sees the rules as definite boundaries and rarely challenges rules

SUGGESTED READING

- Allen, David. *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity*. New York: Penguin Books, 2015. How to build a system so that you can get things out of your head and onto paper or screen.
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