Agile by Choice: How to be an agile leader and create awareness

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How to be an agile leader and create awareness through five people-centric steps.

Agile depends on awareness. Awareness is what you see when the light of focused attention shines.

Here are five people-centric steps that you can use to raise your awareness of the challenge at hand.

BE AWARE

The better you can focus your attention, the faster you will be aware.

- Triggers: let your thoughts flow, and be open to finding associations through questions and visualizing your challenges.
- Time: Ideas and insights come fast. It may feel like time has stopped. How much time do you need to question and visualize?
- Interference: Rational thoughts often crowd our creativity and intuition. Keep that in mind.

Being aware requires physical, emotional and mental alignment. Here is your awareness test: to reach a high level of awareness, you need high scores. Circle the numbers that feel most appropriate to you and then write your total below.

Reaching high awareness depends on finding balance in how you operate:

- Make yourself comfortable: Prevent any interference, be comfortable, remove tensions, be fully relaxed. Breathe.
- Quiet your mind: Choose a word, a sentence or a sound. Breathe and speak it out quietly over a couple of minutes. Count up to ten and down until you have reached full concentration.
- Visualize: Imagine an object that inspires you. Concentrate on it until your brain is empty.
- Charge up: Activate a symbol by finding an image or object that symbolizes power and energy to you. Activate your intrinsic motivation and use it to turn negative into positive.
- Programme a trigger: When you have reached high awareness, attach a symbol or sign to it such that you can trigger clarity by activating your trigger. Practice the trigger so that you can use it in challenging situations.

FOCUS ATTENTION

Concentrating to reaching high focus of attention is comparably easy. Focus is easily lost. Getting it back and maintaining it is more difficult.

For executives, dealing with challenges, difficult topics and questions is normally important, serious and emotional. This requires that you often need to focus your attention to reach a high degree of awareness and clarity. As such, it is important to be able to quickly activate the process and maintain it at a high level. Focus of atten- tion requires energy, discipline and control.

Here is what you can do:

- Don’t worry about how well you do this; view it as a game – the inner game
- Don’t search for answers – they will come
- Be open to new insights
- Be aware – observe
- Keep focusing on the thing you need to think about
- Refocus. When sources of interference pop up, refocus your

attention to regain your high level of awareness

IT’S YOUR CHOICE

Leaders have a tendency to start by clarifying their activities. But awareness starts with the intent. The clearer the definition of the challenge, the clearer the intent. The clearer the intent, the more options are available. The better the options are, the more likely the solution to succeed.

Here is what you can do:

- Start with the question
- Ask yourself why it matters
- Focus on a metric that defines the intent • Define the best approach

TRUST YOUR PERSPECTIVE

To raise the awareness on challenging situations and decisions, it is important to consider different perspectives. This may change your perspective but trust it once you have made the choice.

Changing perspective means:

- Seeing with other eyes
- Changing the time frame
- Seeing the bigger picture

VISUALIZE YOUR INTENT

Visualizing is the ability to use your imagination to see how to get to your intent. It is an ability that is not a given with most leaders. Ensure that there is data and analysis to support your intuition.

Here is what you can do:

- Compare advantages and disadvantages
- Remove alternatives
- Compare options with a point of reference
- Calculate probabilities
- Evaluate trade-offs

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