Guidebook to:

The Language of Leadership Acceleration

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It will be essential for your organization to become fluent in the language of growth.

(and remember, learning is not the same as growth –

see COMMIT guidebook)
It begins with more relevance to the context of your business—what we call *Business Drivers*

Business Drivers are the broad leadership challenges or obstacles that must be hurdled to execute an organization’s strategic and cultural priorities to drive the business forward.

Starting with Business Drivers provides a clear, simple connection between business and cultural priorities and the leadership needed to meet them.

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You now need to define what it takes for leaders to succeed within that business context. These are—

SUCCESS PROFILES
Success Profiles
What are Success Profiles?

Success profiles define the specifics of what it takes for leaders to be successful. There are 4 components of a success profile:

1. Competencies
2. Personal Attributes
3. Experience
4. Knowledge
1 Competencies

Clusters of related behaviors that are associated with success or failure in a job. *(What people can do.)*
Personal Attributes

Stable individual dispositions or abilities—including personality, cognitive ability, and motivation—that are related to job success. *(Who people are.)*
Experience

Job assignments and situations that one is likely to encounter in a given role or job family or that must be experienced and mastered before taking on a role. (What people have done.)
4 Knowledge

Requisite knowledge, business understanding, and awareness of how the organization and industry operate, including markets, technology, systems, processes, functions, products, services, and other stable elements of the organization and business sector. (*What people know.*)
You probably have at least some elements of a success profile in use; but to guarantee accuracy, consistency, and insight, make sure your success profile measures each of the four components.
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**Knowledge**
- Organizational knowledge
- Awareness of key systems/ processes
- Industry and technical expertise

**Competencies**
- Critical skills/capabilities
- Key Actions within each competency to provide behavioral specificity
- Leadership Essentials

**Experience**
- Critical job challenges
- Key assignments/roles
- Industry and technical experience

**Personal Attributes**
- Stable individual dispositions
- Personality derailers and enablers
- Cognitive ability
- Motivation/Aspiration
- Leadership potential

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“More critical to discern as one accelerates toward higher levels of leadership are competencies and personal attributes—the variables that more significantly differentiate success from failure."
Why You Need Great Competencies
The key is to arrive at the shortest possible list of competencies that represent the most critical skills needed for success in the role.
It is helpful to understand four skill domains to ensure that your competency model represents each:

• Interpersonal Effectiveness
• Leadership Impact
• Business/Management Skills
• Personal Effectiveness Skills
Interpersonal Effectiveness

Interpersonal and communication behaviors that facilitate successful one-on-one and group interactions. Examples are Strategic Influence and Building Customer Relationships.
Leadership Impact

Leadership behaviors that guide others in the successful execution of their assigned responsibilities and help them aspire to and achieve organizational outcomes. Examples are Leading Change and Energizing the Organization.
Business/Management Skills

Management behaviors that guide or direct the business unit or project in achieving the outcomes necessary for success. Examples are Operational Decision Making and Entrepreneurship.
Personal Effectiveness

Individual styles or behavior patterns that facilitate success or failure on the job. Examples are Positive Approach and Authenticity.
But simply defining competencies isn’t enough. . .

Once you have defined competencies, do not accept them as sufficient until you also know that they reflect the behaviors—**Key Actions**—needed to master each competency.
“Competencies without the correct Key Actions are like misleading instructions.”
How to Develop Key Actions

1. To assess competencies, start with Key Actions and combine those judgments into competency ratings—not the other way around.

2. To develop competencies, focus on the Key Actions that have been identified as most important for the individual.
The only way your leaders will master competencies is to practice and hone the Key Actions.

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Personal Attributes: The Most Difficult Component to Develop
There are four primary categories of personal attributes:

• Personality
• Motivation
• Cognitive Ability
• Leadership Potential Factors

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Personality

The stable, enduring aspects of one’s disposition or nature, including performance enablers, such as Sociability or Interpersonal Sensitivity, and performance derailers, such as Arrogance or Volatility.
Motivation

Fundamental motives or preferences in the workplace, such as the desire for leadership and advancement; work values, such as quality, collaboration, affiliation, or altruism; geographic mobility; and technical, professional, or industry interests.
Cognitive Ability

Intellectual and reasoning abilities, such as critical thinking, business judgment, logic, and quantitative and qualitative analytical capacity.
Leadership Potential Factors

Behaviorally defined factors related to the likelihood that one will develop and grow quickly as a leader, accelerating readiness for higher levels of responsibility.

These are behavioral in nature and are much less developable than competencies, they are considered elements of personal attributes.

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The difficulty in developing personal attributes should not be a reason to avoid measuring them. Understanding the stable attributes that underlie these capabilities and tendencies is crucial to enabling leaders to adjust and adapt to changing circumstances.
Knowing **why** we do what we do often is the most useful asset in preparing to take on a task or responsibility we’ve never attempted."
Making it Work
Making it Work

A Success Profile initiative rarely adds value when built in isolation of planned applications.
Making it Work

This is because the declared objectives are to define and communicate the new profile and ensure that it is available for use in all HR systems.

These are the WRONG initial objectives.
Making it Work

To achieve their intended value, they must be put to use!
• Use Success Profiles for a common definition of success
• Understand the key actions needed to master each competency
• Measure personal attributes and the role they play in a leader’s behavior
• Apply the Success Profile to other HR systems

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Remember, AIM isn’t just about the language of Success Profiles! In *Leaders Ready Now* you’ll learn about generating energy through:

- More relevance to the business context:
  Business Drivers provide a clear, simple connection between business and cultural priorities and the leadership needed to meet them.

- More precise, accurate guidance for skill development:
  Actions describe exactly how competencies can be practices to achieve proficiency or mastery.

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Learn More about AIM
to define leadership success for your business context:

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