

Leadership Sustainability: A Framework to Sustain Culture Shifts

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Organizations that seek to create and sustain culture shifts must do more than train leaders to lead and manage in new ways. They must also be effective in developing people at all levels of the organization to sustain these culture shifts. Leading, developing and managing people in real time is critical for the long-term success of culture shifts.

This type of human development is complex. It must be aligned with the strategic priorities of the organization yet have meaning and relevance not just for leaders but for everyone if it is to be sustainable over time. Change must be adopted at all levels of the organization and incorporated into the core of thinking and behavior in the organization. As a result, we need to look at leadership development differently in terms of how we learn, transmit knowledge, develop skills and how we measure and evaluate it.

My company, Patwell Consulting, has been developing and implementing large scale, complex leadership development programs for over three decades. Based on years of research and practice in large organizations, I have created unique design elements in my programs aimed at sustainable leadership that focuses on helping leaders to play an active role in leading change, transmitting their knowledge, and dealing with business challenges. These elements that I will discuss, go far beyond the classroom to engage people at all levels and achieve results that embed and sustain culture shifts in organizations.

This article synthesizes my experiences in developing a Sustainable Leadership Development Framework. This framework moves through four stages that help build and ground the implementation of an organization's leadership development strategy through a vision and strategic steps that result in lasting organizational culture shifts. Examples of wise practices will be given to highlight the key concepts of this framework so that you too can use these strategies to increase the potential of leadership sustainability in your organization.

What is Leadership Sustainability?

Let's begin by defining leadership sustainability. In my view, a leader is someone who people admire and will follow, who can direct and guide others, and who can make decisions that benefit the organization and its stakeholders. In prior decades, it was sufficient for someone to have natural leadership skills such as charisma, intelligence, vision, and political savvy. In today's world, however, the complexity of the business world, globalization, and the rapid pace of change makes it difficult, if not impossible, to rely on a

fixed set of skills that last the lifetime of a leader. Sustainable leadership today must be far more dynamic and evolving. Leaders must continuously improve their skills, keep an eye on trends, stay abreast of technology, and be willing to change both themselves and the culture of their company.

This presents a paradox because leadership sustainability implies lasting change yet it also requires a different way of thinking and a shift in mindset that ultimately shapes the culture of the organization. Every organization needs good, solid leadership that acts as the foundation of its culture. At the same time, it needs these leaders to grow, learn, adapt, innovate and move with the pace of its organization and context. This requires what I call Leadership Sustainability. I define this as the practice, structure and mechanisms that can help leaders apply constant learning and development at the individual, team, organizational and community levels so that they can continue to advance their leadership, especially in the context of leading and maintaining successful culture shifts.

My ideas about leadership sustainability were inspired extensively by my work and training in the late 1970s and early 1980s when I studied Special Care Counseling at Vanier College, and later, Applied Social Sciences at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec. In those programs, I learned the fundamentals of human systems thinking, a theory that has shaped my work in organizational development and coaching. In order to sustain change on the individual, team, organizational and cultural levels, I learned that we must first understand individuals (and to some extent, small teams) within their own context. Only then we can apply this understanding to improve how individuals relate to larger systems, be these family, large teams, departments, organizations, communities and the world.

This principle is critical today as we operate in a world of complexities and constantly shifting interdependencies among many external and internal forces that impact large-scale systems. One cannot influence or change organizations and their culture by manipulating the “system” at the macro level and expect that the individuals who compose the system will change. It is somewhat analogous to the “butterfly effect” in that if you want to shift weather patterns, you cannot start at 35,000 feet with the tops of the clouds, but rather, you must begin with the flapping of the butterfly wings wherever they are. Large-scale systems are simply too powerful if not too cumbersome to change, buffeted as they are in today’s world by a multitude of unpredictable forces including technology, politics,

environmental issues, social change, and more. We need now more than ever to consider the human element when developing strategies for sustainable change.

And this impacts leadership—how we teach, develop, and support it so that it, too, is sustainable. Given this systems thinking approach, I have come to see Leadership Sustainability as far more important in organizational success than achieving the results of any one single change initiative. Organizations may be able to transform themselves with great results based on some flavor-of-the-year change program, but sustaining a deeply grounded culture change for decades requires a very different view of leadership and consequently how we develop our people and evaluate our programs.

In their book *Leadership Sustainability: Seven Disciplines to Achieve the Changes Great Leaders Know They Must Make*, David Ulrich and Norm Smallwood define leadership sustainability as a concept parallel to environmental sustainability (p. vii). In the environmental view, organizations must seek to shape their culture and all its actions to enhance their reputation as responsible members of their community and custodians of the world's resources. In a similar way, leadership sustainability begins with recognition that what matters most is the impact of leaders' actions on others in their community. What counts are not the results of their actions or the rationale behind them, but rather the personal intentions and observable behaviors of leaders and how they impact the people in the organization.

Leadership Sustainability takes courage and time. It is not easy to achieve. It is more rare than one might think. In *Leadership Sustainability* (Ulrich and Smallwood) they describe McKinsey's research that found only 30% of major organizational change initiatives succeed over a long-term and that proportion drops to just 19% for culture-change initiatives. Their conclusion: "The critical issue is how the change is accomplished, not so much what the change is" (p.5 *Leadership Sustainability* by Dave Ulrich and Norm Smallwood).

Culture Change vs. Culture Shift

Before I talk further about leadership sustainability, it is important to clarify a term that is misleading and often at the root of many problems in understanding leadership sustainability. We have been using the term "culture change" for decades. It is ingrained in our vocabulary as a key leadership competency. I prefer to use the word "culture shift".

Based on my work, this is more representative of the reality of what I experience in my work. We are developing and implementing strategies that create change that comes about from shifts in the way we work. When these shifts are designed and coordinated across the organization they result in culture change. Working with culture shifts is a more organic and natural approach that helps people engage with the new direction and also helps them to relate to the changes from their own perspectives, roles and responsibilities. Culture shifts are smart adjustments in organizations that are created through the implementation of new business models, organizational designs, new or improved business processes, technologies and ultimately changes in the way we are in relationship to each other, our colleagues, clients, partners and the external community.

Culture shifts imply a sense of a philosophical change to mindsets and behaviors that can help organizations be more effective and successful. For example, an organization might need to move away from working in a hierarchical structure to working in a network, or from working in silos to leading with influence and collaborating in cross-functional, cross-professional and cross-organizational teams. These are shifts in the way we work and when coordinated, become part of the larger culture change.

People are more accepting, and even willing, to embrace shifts rather than change. One of my clients, four months into a program I was conducting with them, said he had never had the degree of buy-in and motivation as he was having with his company when we talked about “shifts” rather than culture change. Adopting this term inspired people to accept the new behaviors and processes they were seeking to implement. People began speaking the same language about the need to find new ways of working, adopting new values and beliefs that were quite different from six months prior to the start of our initiative. He could detect that a shift had happened when he saw and heard his people thinking and doing things differently.

The Sustainable Leadership Development Framework

In my work over many years with large organizations, I have been experimenting and developing programs that could intentionally foster leadership sustainability. Within the past few years, I have solidified my work into one framework that can be integrated and support any type of leadership development program. This framework was originally

designed to help implement and evaluate the impact of a “Service Excellence Leads Development Program” in the City of Ottawa, Canada.¹

At that time, Ottawa was implementing a strategy to foster a culture of service excellence citywide that would impact employees at all levels of the organization. The City was seeking a process to evaluate the program’s design, content and learning at the individual, project team, and organizational levels. They wanted to be able to measure how well they were doing in achieving their objectives in this change initiative, and how to understand what would be needed to sustain learning and the culture shifts once the program was completed.

As I began working with Ottawa, I saw that they were asking the same key questions that most organizations struggle with when initiating a culture change:

1. How can we evaluate the impact of the program on the work we do and our strategic goals and objectives?
2. How can we ensure what people learn in the classroom is integrated in their work and transferred to others?
3. What is our return on the investment?
4. How can we make sure people adopt the new behaviors, concepts and principles in their work and life?
5. How can we ensure we can carry on the program without you, the trainer, consultant and coach?
6. How much will it cost in terms of time, resources and money?

These questions are complex to answer. They are often handled in isolation of each other and not integrated in a systemic way. It became clear that to develop a sustainability plan, these issues must be considered upfront in the design of the change programs and initiatives as well as the leadership development strategies.

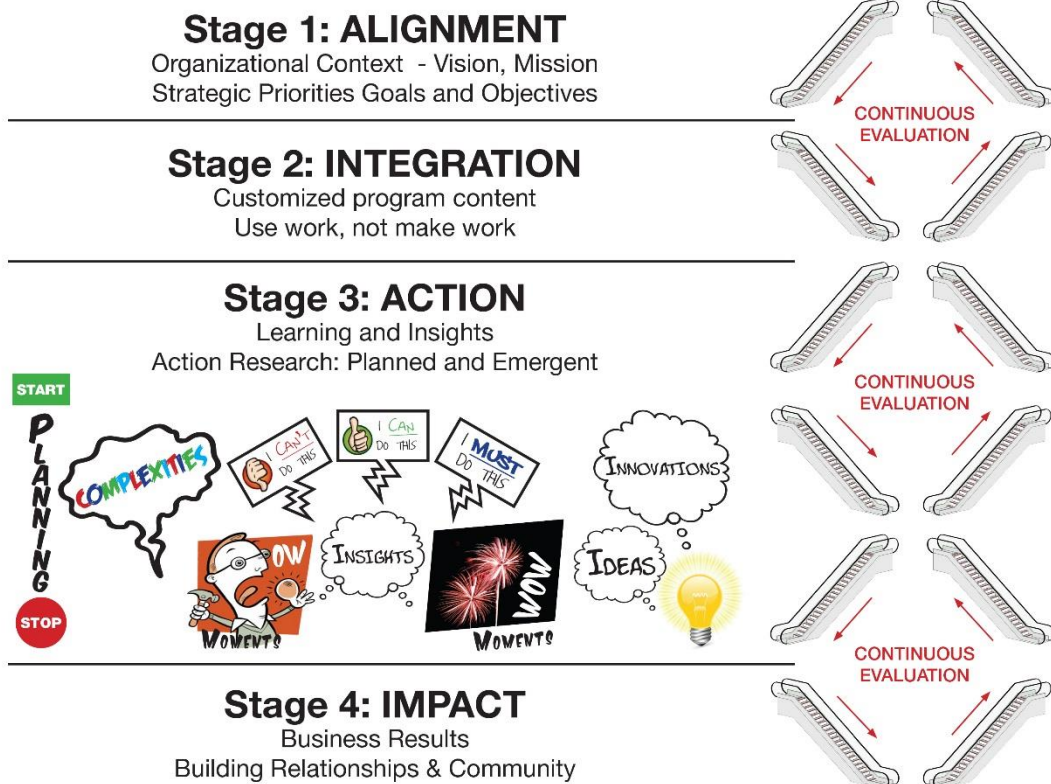
In working with Ottawa, my ideas gelled into a set of four key stages that became the Sustainable Leadership Development Framework. These stages occur in sequence, though there is some overlap among the stages and going through them can be iterative. These four key stages are constantly at play in the design, delivery and evaluation of any

¹ An Innovative Approach to Fostering A Culture of Service Excellence in the City of Ottawa. (2012) <http://irc.queensu.ca/articles/innovative-approach-fostering-culture-service-excellence-city-ottawa>

leadership development program (Figure 1). In the rest of this article, we will walk through the stages one by one and observe how they create the foundation for leadership sustainability.

Figure 1: The Stages of a Sustainable Leadership Development Framework

SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



Stage 1: Alignment

This first stage involves defining the purpose of the leadership development or change program and articulating how it supports the organization's vision, context and strategic priorities. This step requires involvement from the senior leaders responsible for leading the changes.

The goal of alignment is to ensure leaders at all levels understand their role in leading, managing and participating in the change journey.

This process is often best done by forming a Design Team comprised of a cross section or representation of the people who will be leading and participating in the program. The team should have representation from the key business leaders and the support functions e.g. human resources, organizational development, communications, and six sigma/process improvement/change leaders, depending on how the organization is structured. External consultants can be partners in this process and should be included so they too can deepen their understanding of the context of the organization, the challenges, and what is required for success. This Design Team's mandate is to align the program with the organization's mission and strategy and test the feasibility of the program's design, content, delivery, and supports pre-, during, and post program to ensure it meets the needs of the organization and objectives. Through working together on this team effort, knowledge transfer, development and alignment take place, leading to a more sustainable culture shift.

These are some of the questions to consider in planning the alignment stage:

1. How does this program or change support our strategic direction?
2. What is the purpose of this program?
3. Who will be participating?
4. How are we involving the senior leaders? Key stakeholders?
5. How much time and effort will it require of people to participate?
6. What will be the benefit for each group involved? Our product? Our clients?

The alignment stage should not be taken lightly. Frankly, I believe that, in order to be successful in creating, leading, and managing sustainable change, leaders must invest in a serious study of their organization in order to know how it truly works, what is sacred to keep, and what is open to change. They need to take time to understand the organization's history, its evolution, its values and current practices before they embark on changing or shifting it. Effectively, if any culture shift is to succeed, it must be aligned with the organizational context and strategies, as well as any other initiatives going on, to achieve sustainable transformational change.

Shifts cannot be rushed. Transformational culture change takes time. Unfortunately, in our fast-paced work environments, people are often impatient and want change to happen overnight. Really meaningful shifts can take months, if not a year or more. Through deep reflection and patient study, leaders can learn what is important to hold onto out of respect

for the organization's history, what is useful to leverage from their existing culture to accomplish change, and what might need to be completely jettisoned because it hinders the organization's ability to compete or progress. This process, if done well, pays off in the long term as the work gets done more collaboratively and with a common sense of purpose that holds everyone accountable.

One organization I worked with involved most of their senior leaders and managers from the next level down in their design team. The group worked together to define the strategic priorities and expected outcomes of their leadership development program. They invited feedback from both levels of leaders, which was then integrated into the program content and design. This process worked well and created alignment and strong commitment to the strategy. They also developed a common language across departments and functions about the vision for change. This process also engaged the next level of leadership as active leaders, participants, advocates, and supporters of the program, resulting in stronger teamwork in the executive leadership group, which proved valuable when going into this large change initiative.

Here are some ways to measure and evaluate the Alignment Phase.

Ways to measure impact during Alignment	Strategies for next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of common language and commitment at strategic levels (Executive Team, Senior Leaders, critical stakeholders) • Depth of understanding of the Senior Managers and Executive Team in their role and contribution in the change process • Clarity of the vision, goals and objectives with the overall strategy and organizational direction. • Degree of commitment, alignment and conflict • Level of teamwork/participation • Commitment to the process • Frequency of inclusion of the program or change initiatives in communications at all levels of the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss observations and respond to feedback or suggestions • Provide direction, tools and supports for communication • Design working sessions that are meaningful and provides opportunity for input, decision making, teamwork • Have people observe other parts of the organization to gain empathy and understanding of complex issues, resistance and other factors that influence their positions • Share examples, best/wise practices • Demonstrate the application of concepts to your organizational context • Develop examples that illustrate where you are headed • Develop key messages together

Stage 2: Integration

Leaders are often sent to “training” to learn new concepts and skills, yet are not supported to continue their development upon return to their workplace. They struggle to integrate their learning into their work and life.

To ensure sustainability of leadership development, I believe that leadership and change initiatives must be designed in such a way as to account for meaningful integration of learning and work. This usually requires customizing the program content and process to ensure participants use their real work and life experiences as the basis for reflecting, experimenting, and applying their learning. My view is that a development program loses great value if it creates additional work that is supposed to be completed outside of participant’s actual job experience. Learning experiences are most valuable, meaningful, and relevant when they add value to the participants’ work and life. The key is to engage participants and motivate them to master and integrate the new concepts, skills and learning back into their real jobs.

One of the most effective ways to do this is to allow participants to use a real project or leadership challenge from their work to anchor their learning. Real projects are more effective than hypothetical research because they stem from actual challenges that must be acted upon. The choice of projects should be based on a tangible need that participants have in their workplace and reflect tasks and decisions they can address given their actual span of control and influence. It is also important that the project be linked to the strategic priorities of the organization. This “Use Work, Don’t Make Work” approach helps everyone engage meaningfully in the process and ensures that the work being done in the classroom setting or offsite will be sustained between sessions and have a real impact in their workplace.

To increase the probability of success and sustainability over the long term, I recommend that projects or challenges be:

- something participants can complete on their own or as part of a team of leaders who will also be attending the program;
- within their span of control or authority;
- supported by their immediate manager;
- aligned and advance their department’s strategic goals;
- focused on helping to cultivate a culture of change; and
- designed to support their personal learning objectives.

For example, a senior leader might try to implement a safety or employee retention strategy that requires employees to engage in a new vision or develop a shared mindset different from the current workplace culture, or simply to work differently as a result of a new technology. Other ideas for leadership development projects might be to prepare for an actual merger that is supposed to take place between two functions or departments, or to study a process that changes how customer service is delivered. Leaders can use such challenges to ground their learning in the program while at the same time advance their real work beyond the classroom. In an Institutional Excellence Leadership Development Program I conducted with a Canadian university, we asked senior leaders to identify the key challenges they believed were blocking their ability to achieve institutional excellence. Each of these leaders had to form cross-university, cross-functional, or cross-professional teams to work on their challenges, which were real and tied to their strategic priorities and most importantly to the university's vision. This approach permitted the leaders to begin immediately implementing concepts they learned in the program into their real work. It was also designed to help them recognize themes and patterns experienced by their colleagues on other teams that highlighted the culture shifts required for sustainability in the long term.

The teams completed a Leadership Challenge Project Briefing document as part of their preparatory work, then reported on their results during the program. Six months later, they were asked to report again on how they integrated their learning, what actions

Leadership Challenge Outline

- 1. Describe the change project or leadership challenge you want to do:**
 - a. What is the context (factors influencing change: internal and external)
 - b. Why is it important to address this project or challenge?
 - c. What are the objectives, deliverables and expected outcomes?
 - d. Who are the key stakeholders or people that need to be involved in the change?
 - e. How will you measure success?
- 2. Describe the anticipated impact of the change on the:**
 - a. People
 - b. Process
 - c. Technology
 - d. Structure
 - e. Culture
- 3. Provide a project update:**
 - a. Where are you in the project plan?
 - b. What key milestones or results have you achieved?
 - c. What successes have you achieved?
 - d. What is helping you to be successful?
 - e. What is preventing you from being as successful as you would like to be?
 - f. What are some of your challenges or learning opportunities?
 - g. Where are you blocked, stalled, or needing some assistance?
 - h. How ready are your key stakeholders to participate and engage in the change process?
- 4. Describe your learning goals and objectives:**
 - a. What do you want to accomplish in the program?
 - b. Where are you having the most success leading, managing and implementing change?
 - c. Where are you having the most difficulty?
 - d. What are the key questions or hot topics that you would like to cover in the workshop that would be most helpful to you and your team in developing your change strategy?

they took, the impact that resulted from their work, and what new principles they learned about leading in their organization from a personal, team, organizational, community and cultural perspective.

This process of integrating development learning with real work helped these leaders to better and earlier grasp the themes, patterns, and actions they needed to take to sustain their learning and that of others going forward. It maximized their potential for integrating learning and developing real life strategies that enhanced their leadership abilities.

On page 10, there are some guiding questions that can help your program participants frame a change project or leadership challenge. This survey also helps the Design Team track emerging themes and patterns that might also reflect issues in the organizational culture that need to be addressed in the leadership sustainability plan for individual leaders and/or organization wide.

Here are ways to measure the impact during the Integration Phase.

Ways to measure impact during Integration	Strategies for next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assessments pre, during and post the program to assess self-confidence, skills and perceptions • Individual participant survey and evaluations designed to assess satisfaction levels and reactions immediately following a workshop, meeting, intervention • Qualitative and quantitative measurements of what participants thought and felt about the training and development activities as well as their suggestions to improve, enhance and sustain their learning. • Measurement of the participant's ability to apply and implement their learning through behavior change back in the workplace and at home. • Degree of common language and commitment to the changes • Depth of understanding of their role and contribution in the change process • Follow-up with subset groups of participants from the program • Informal network/peer feedback • Observations and results/outcomes linked to their work • Reports to Executive Leaders and dialogue with participant leaders on the progress of their projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share emergent actions and impacts with the Design Team to improve the program design, interventions and learning process. • Hold quarterly checkpoint meetings with the Senior Management Team and relevant stakeholders to educate them on the results, what is required for them to continue championing and leading change and obtain input on what they need to continue supporting the culture shifts. • Develop suggestions • Customize the program, provide examples highlight successes • Use reflections to advance/enhance strategy • Coach upwards and with peers • Use the data to develop more empowering strategies that work and are relevant for your culture

Stage 3: Action

Kurt Lewin, the founder of modern social psychology, introduced the corporate world to experiential learning, group dynamics and action research. Through his work and that of those who followed, they taught us the importance of using our environment as a living laboratory, in which the process of Reflecting, Planning, Acting and Observing helps us to become more effective leaders. Key to action research is understanding that it is through action that we learn.

Taking action propels us away from doing nothing to doing something. It helps us to gain confidence, learn about ourselves and others and our larger context, and ultimately make more informed choices and decisions that lead to deeper and more impactful interventions on all levels. Taking action also helps us notice and become aware of the impact of our choices on others. We also learn to walk in the shoes others, seeking to understand their world, so that we can develop empathy, and deepen our understanding of the shared values, norms, and cultural implications that are constantly at play when we interact with others. I embed these same action research principles in this critical third stage of my Sustainable Leadership Framework.

Taking action is not, however, a static process. It must be done with an awareness that the world changes, and so any actions taken must remain open to shifts and alterations to fit new contexts as they arise. The problem is, in many change and leadership development programs, participants typically go through a process and are expected to deliver on a fixed “planned change project” that has a beginning, middle, and end. They often must select a project that has a finite goal and must do whatever it takes to make it a success. The problem with this approach is that, as soon as participants begin interacting with others to plan and implement their project, they quickly discover they need to learn how to adapt to unexpected changes and dynamics that inevitably emerge. Too many initiatives don’t plan for this shifting experience, other than as a contingency or at the end of the process as a reflection in the wrap up, debrief, or post-mortem.

In the Sustainable Leadership Development Framework, the certainty of emergent action is taken into account from the beginning. We encourage people to notice the impact of their actions and make any necessary adjustments along the way. This helps them become more aware and sensitive to what is working and what is not, as well as more willing to adjust

their choices accordingly. They learn how to be not just effective leaders, but observers and interveners throughout the action process.

Here is 6-point plan to capture the emergent learning that invariably happens during the action phase:

1. Develop learning goals that are aligned with the strategy and supported with an action plan with timelines and measures of success;
2. Formulate a baseline of questions to ask participants that measure their confidence in leading change and the key competencies they are developing;
3. Build in checkpoint meetings in which you ask participants to reflect on their experiences, share their observations, and talk about what they are learning about themselves, their teams, the organization, and their work.
4. Look for themes, patterns and observations about the values, norms, and culture of the organization. Discuss what, if anything, has changed about them, or what was or could be modified or adapted from their original plan and why it changed or needs to change?
5. Identify what in their action steps might need to be leveraged or what needs to be shifted.
6. Ask participants to adapt their plans accordingly.

Here are some questions to help participants identify the emerging themes and issues that they experienced. These questions are usually completed at a key milestone, checkpoint or as they wrap up their project.

Emerging Themes and Issues Questionnaire

1. What are some of your most exciting moments that you experienced working on this project or challenge?
2. What happened? What did you do?
3. Why was this experience so special or meaningful for you?
4. What fears, worries, obstacles or barriers are you facing?
5. What are you choosing to share with others?
6. What are you keeping to yourself? Why?
7. What personal leadership challenges do you need to overcome in order to be successful?
8. Where did you experience conflict or stress?
9. What did you do?
10. Were your actions effective?
11. What would you do differently?
12. What supports do you need to sustain your leadership development?

Here are ways to measure impact during the Action Phase.

Ways to measure impact during Action	Strategies for next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Measure the increase in the participant's knowledge and skills through self-ratings and that of others• Track actions for what was implemented, what was changed and what needs to be adjusted• Track themes and patterns from shared experiences, actions and learning• Personal leadership reflection questions and journals• Competency assessments• Coaching conference calls• Follow up meetings/check point meetings• Participant reflections in each workshop• Quality and quantity of reflections and impacts reported in learning groups that take place in-between structured learning sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tell stories to increase transparency in learning reinforce the culture shifts, learning and leadership competencies for success• Create a common understanding of the cultural and systemic issues/context needed to be challenged and those needed for success• Provide real life and current examples of successful projects and lessons, concepts and tools that can be replicated across the organization• Create an understanding of personal strengths and challenges that are most often shared by others, dispel isolation and create support systems• Use this information to set priorities and goal setting for personal development• Identify resources and a support system to draw on for personal growth and success in the implementation of their projects.

Stage 4: Impact

As you can see, measuring the impact of a leadership development or change initiative is critical to understanding what is needed for sustainability. In this framework, while I call Impact the fourth stage, it actually must take place throughout the three previous stages of alignment, integration, and action. Measuring the results and impact at every stage of the program at the individual, team, and organizational levels provides rich data, deep insights, and new strategies that sustain leadership development and culture shifts throughout and beyond the program. The image of the escalator implies that the evaluation is an iterative and fluid process that needs to be linked to the strategy, actions and results on the individual, team, organizational and community levels.

Finally, here are some strategies to measure impact.

Ways to measure impact at the end of the process	Strategies for next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurements of the impact of the participant's performance and/or learning on the client experience, business and/or the culture shifts and changes • Track the number of projects completed and the qualitative results achieved (cost savings, time, quality, improvements in products and services, etc.) • Review the action research projects results, depth and degree of impact • Quality and quantity of discussions with Senior Management • Quality and quantity of discussions with peers and direct reports • Quality and quantity of discussions and work with customers and partners • Review or retest of employee / customer / stakeholder satisfaction surveys • Common understanding of the change • Shared mindset • Increased perception and confidence in leaders • Completion of key activities, milestones • Success Stories • Further development of strategies, plans and projects to sustain change and go to the next step • Checkpoint meetings with Senior Staff, all key leaders, and stakeholders • Annual and quarterly Senior Management Team Meetings • Managers Forums • Workshops • Quality and Quantity of Senior Management participation in learning forums • Benchmarking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess employees understanding and adoption of change at all levels of the organization • Assess the effectiveness and usage of the network • Leverage ideas from other areas and departments • Increase pride in working at the organization • Increase sense of belonging • Increase employee confidence and a sense of what they need to be successful • Increase breadth, depth and scope of their projects and work • Transfer knowledge and leverage of wise practices being used in other places • Assess pace and adoption of change • Assess process and results of organizational plans and alignment • Check to see if the changes are tracked as a separate items, or if they are part of everyone's work and every strategic plan • Determine if the vision elements are implemented and being used e.g. technology, business models, etc.

Conclusion

This Sustainable Leadership Development Framework's key stages of Alignment-Integration-Action-Impact is more than an evaluation framework. It is an integrated approach to leadership and organizational development that results in sustainable culture shifts and business results.

The strategies, tactics and tools that support this model can be adapted to any organizational context. They are designed to help you think about how to integrate your own personal leadership capabilities, with your approach to developing others and ultimately your organization.

Key to success is also recognizing that leadership development happens at all levels. It is a process that needs to be continuously monitored, evaluated and sustained over time.

As we have discussed, evaluating the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of leadership development programs is complex. In order to build lasting culture change, it is vital to take a large-scale systems approach that, like the butterfly effect, happens through the engagement and active participation of the larger numbers of employees, across groups and geographies, and at deeper levels of change.

Sustainable change requires the alignment and integration of vision, strategy and context in the program design, curriculum and actions at all levels of the organization.

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