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DUALITY LEADERSHIP AT ATKINSREALIS: FROM AN EXECUTION TO EXPLORATION AND GROWTH CULTURE

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Abstract

Whilst there is a wide range of interests in the many facets of leadership promoting multiple models and frameworks, the majority continue to be concerned with diagnosis, analysis, traits, and behaviours. In contrast, the authors focus on an approach that seeks to design, deliver, and embed a significant shift in organizational culture and leadership behaviour. A new metatheory of leadership is offered, combined with a change management methodology which utilizes the reconciliation of competency dilemmas as the core process. The treatment to reconciling these organizational dilemmas are culturally defined. The premise is that, by thinking and acting to reconcile competing and seemingly irreconcilable dilemmas, leaders are better able to embed change, deliver performance and be more successful cross-culturally.

This theoretical approach to culture change and the related leadership metatheory is then operationalized through a case study which is founded around the Canadian engineering giant AtkinsRéalis (ATRL)¹. We explore the five “dualities” or dilemmas that AtkinsRéalis leaders faced whilst trying to bridge from execution to exploration using what the authors define and explain as ‘through-through thinking’ to build a new way of conceiving leadership that delivers.

This cultural and leadership behavioural change practice was supported through the introduction of Servant Leadership training to underpin new leadership behaviour and competencies. Further, the authors set out the practical steps to prepare for, deliver, embed, and then measure such a cultural and behavioural change over a number of years, including the HR tools, an engagement survey and interventions from the world of musical performance.

Keywords: corporate culture, inter & cross-cultural management, dilemma theory

Introduction

This text posits that changing an organization’s culture is a contradiction in terms. This is because cultures act to preserve themselves and to protect their own living existence. So, rather than seeing change as a ‘thing’ opposing continuity, it is considered as a difference. We believe organizations seek change to preserve the company, its profitability, or market

¹ AtkinsRéalis was formerly known as SNC-Lavalin. The company rebranded in September 2023. Various charts and diagrams within the text will refer to SNC-Lavalin to document to illustrate where the company was at a given point in the journey.

share, or core competencies. The reason for changing certain aspects of the culture is to avoid changing in other respects. In short, organizations must reconcile change with continuity in order to preserve their evolving identity for the best. These tensions manifest themselves as a series of dilemmas.

A new framework for delivering culture change. Most existing change frameworks tend to want to discard the current situation in favor of a new corporate culture, in the process potentially discarding the best of what already existed. The need for change at AtkinsRéalisis required a different approach to the traditional change models in place.

Dilemma management and reconciliation. The new approach for the management of change is to reconcile these dilemmas. Compromise in dealing with competing demands alone is insufficient. The host company consciously needed to retain key elements of its ‘performance engine’ execution culture but at the same time, shift its leadership behaviors and the wider organizational culture to move beyond this and prepare for the pivot to growth challenges ahead.

The research question that evolves to address the above is to ask ‘*how can organisations keep their current momentum but deliver the required culture change to safeguard their future?*’ The answer explored herein requires a different approach to both leadership and change-management – that of the capability to reconcile dilemmas.

Managing change

According to Lewin’s force-field theory (Lewin, 1951), organizations are in dynamic tension between forces pushing for change and forces resistant to change. Established change management practice has interpreted this on the basis that it is management’s task to reduce resistance to change and increase the forces for change in the required direction.

Many conventional attempts frame the change problem in terms of ‘what’, ‘why’ and/or ‘how’ questions. To focus solely on ‘why’ may not translate effectively to address the ‘what’ and/or ‘how’. Focusing on the ‘how’ questions places the effort on means, where diagnosis is assumed or not even undertaken at all, and therefore the ends sought are not necessarily considered. To focus on ends requires the posing of the right ‘what’ questions. What is one trying to accomplish? What needs to be changed? What are the objectives of the change? What are the critical success factors? What resultant measure of performance is one trying to achieve? Ends and means are relative, however, and whether something is an end or a means can only be considered in relation to something else. Thus often, the ‘true’ ends of a change effort may be different from those that were intended at the start of the journey. Within dilemma theory, this is viewed simply as a compromise solution, as, for example, it ignores the fact that increasing the force for change may increase people’s resistance and desire to negate the change.

A new logic is required. By applying an inductive analysis to the evidence and research data, they offer a ‘through’ question approach.

Cultural change as a ‘through-through’ process

Basic to understanding cultural change is the understanding that culture is a series of rules and methods which an organization has evolved to deal with the regular problems it has faced in the past and is facing in the present. These, in turn, manifest as behavioural norms of ‘how we do things around here’. Organisations face dilemmas in dealing with the tension between the existing set of values and the desired ones. While cultures differ markedly in how they approach these dilemmas, they do not differ in needing to make some kind of response. They share the destiny to face up to different challenges of existence. Once the change leaders have become aware of the problem-solving process, they will reconcile dilemmas more effectively and therefore will be more successful.

All effective change processes have in common the need for a diagnosis of the values in use (the existing values system) and mapping the espoused and desired values (the ideal value system). The change process is energized by the tension between the two. Note again that it is not simply the replacement of the existing with the desired. It is enriching the existing with what may well be its opposite. This is the kernel of the ‘through-through’ process

The place of corporate culture in implementing a new design

It is becoming more frequently recognized that change initiatives have failed because aspects of organizational or corporate culture have been ignored. Simply ‘adding’ the culture component to the change plan does not suffice. This explains perhaps why culture is very often overlooked in change plans. Values are not ‘concrete’ artefacts that can be added, rather they are continuously created by interactions between human actors. As such, culture is only meaningful in the context in which the change process is unfolding.

Much of the authors’ inductive thinking has its origin firstly in THT’s portfolio of effective diagnostic and analytical tools and models (THT Consulting, n.d.), and secondly in the large and reliable database established from their use. This enabled us to make our own immediate and data-driven diagnosis of the tensions that AtkinsRéalis was facing.

Structure is a concept that is frequently used in the analysis of organisations, and many definitions and approaches are to be found. The interest here is in examining the interpretations employees give to their relationships with each other and with the organisation as a whole. Culture is to the organisation what personality is to the individual — a hidden yet unifying theme that provides meaning, direction, and mobilization. It is something that can exert a decisive influence on the overall ability of the organisation to deal with the challenges it faces. Just as individuals in a culture can have different personalities while sharing much in common, so too can groups and organisations. It is this pattern that is recognised as ‘corporate culture’. We distinguish three aspects of organisational relationships whose meaning is dependent on the larger culture in which they emerge:

1. the general relationships between employees in the organisation
2. the vertical or hierarchical relationships between employees and their superiors or subordinates
3. the relationships of employees in the organisation as a whole, such as their views of what makes it tick and what are its goals and purpose.

The model of organizational culture

The model we applied owes its origin to the long term extensive research and practitioner practice of author Fons Trompenaars. This model identifies four elements of competing organisational cultures that sit along two related dimensions:

- Task-oriented or Person-centred (high versus low formalisation)
- Hierarchical or Egalitarian (high versus low centralisation).

Combining these dimensions in a matrix gives four possible organizational culture types which in turn influence the prevalent leadership types and behaviours. While the authors could have categorised these orientations using Cameron and Quinn’s competing values framework (Cameron, & Quinn, 2011), or Charles Handy’s early ideas on corporate culture (Handy, 1993), we propose that our adapted model is more discriminating (see Table 1).

Table 1 The extreme stereotypes of corporate culture and leadership behaviours

<i>The person-centred ‘Incubator’ culture</i>	<i>The task-oriented ‘Guided Missile’ culture</i>
This culture is like a leaderless team. This person-oriented culture is characterised by a low degree of both centralisation and formalisation. The individualisation of all related individuals is one of the most important features. At the extreme, the organisation exists only to serve the needs of its members. It has no intrinsic values beyond these goals and becomes an instrument for the specific needs of the individuals in the organisation. Responsibilities and tasks within this type of organisation are assigned primarily according to the members’ own preference and needs. Structure is loose and flexible control takes place through persuasion and mutual concern for the needs and values of members. Its main characteristics are: ➤ person-oriented ➤ power of the individual ➤ self-realisation ➤ commitment to oneself ➤ professional recognition	This task-oriented culture has a low degree of centralisation and a high degree of formalisation. This rational culture is, in its ideal type, task, and project oriented and all about ‘getting the job done’. Organisational relationships are very results-oriented, based on rational / instrumental considerations and limited to specific functional aspects of the persons involved. The management of the organisation is predominantly seen as a continuous process of solving problems successfully and achieving results. Because of its focus, flexibility and dynamism, this culture is highly adaptive but at the same time is difficult to manage. It can be myopic and too focused on the immediate task rather than the greater good. The task-orientation makes it designed for a rapid reaction to extreme changes. Therefore, matrix and project types of organisations are favourite designs for the Guided Missile. Its main characteristics are: ➤ task orientation ➤ power of knowledge/expertise ➤ commitment to tasks ➤ management by objectives ➤ pay for performance
<i>The power-based ‘Family’ culture</i>	<i>The role-based ‘Eiffel Tower’ culture</i>

The Family Culture is characterised by a high degree of centralisation and a low degree of formalisation. It generally reflects a highly personalised organisation and is predominantly power oriented. The power of the organisation is based on an autocratic leader who, like a spider in a web, directs the organisation. Staff tends to be loyal and committed to the organization and the teams they are working for. There are not many rules and thus there is little bureaucracy. Organisational members tend to be as near to the centre as possible, as that is the source of power. Hence the climate inside the organisation is highly manipulative and full of intrigues. In this political system, the prime logic of vertical differentiation is hierarchical differentiation of power and status. Its main characteristics are: ➤ power orientation ➤ personal relationships ➤ entrepreneurial ➤ affinity/trust ➤ power of person	This role-oriented culture is characterised by a high degree of formalisation together with a high degree of centralisation and is symbolically represented by the Eiffel Tower. It is steep, stately and very stable and grounded. Control is exercised through systems of rules, legalistic procedures, assigned rights, levels of authority matrices and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Resultant bureaucracy and the high degree of formalisation can make this organisation inflexible. Respect for authority is based on the respect for functional position and status. Order and predictability are highly valued in the process of managing the organisation. Duty is an important concept for an employee in this role-oriented culture. It is duty one feels within oneself, rather than an obligation one feels towards anyone else. Procedures for initiating and managing change tend to be cumbersome, and this organisation type is slow to adapt and change. Its main characteristics are: ➤ role orientation ➤ power of position/role ➤ job description/evaluation ➤ rules and procedures ➤ order and predictability
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Limitations of Established Leadership Frameworks

Published models of leadership tend to lack any coherent underlying rationale or base pre-proposition that predicts effective leadership behaviours. Researchers and practitioners have attempted to map the personality traits, effective behavioural competencies, contingency, and transformational styles of outstanding leaders. In spite of the extensive proliferation of such research, models and frameworks, too many of these are inadequate for today's world. We find that desirable characteristics or effective behaviours of leadership and other frameworks identified in the USA or Anglo-Saxon cultures do not transfer to modern global business. But neither do examples of more culturally biased frameworks, such as French or Chinese ones. These models also fail at home for an increasingly diverse workforce. And if we subscribe to situational leadership, how do leaders assess multiple situations, and what is appropriate?

These models tend to seek the same end, but differ in approach as they try to encapsulate the existing body of knowledge about what makes an effective leader. Because of the methodology adopted, there is no underlying rationale or unifying theme that defines the holistic characteristic of leadership. This creates considerable confusion for today's world of the transcultural leader. Which paradigm should she or he fit into? Which meanings should a leader espouse, his or her own, or those of the foreign culture? Since most of management theory comes from the USA and other English-speaking countries, there is a real danger of

ethnocentrism. Do different organization and national cultures necessitate different styles? Can we reasonably expect other cultures to follow a lead from outside those cultures? And what type of leadership do we need for reconciling the dilemmas that arise between current and desired organizational cultures?

The Proposed New Metatheory of Leadership

Much attention has been given to the recognition of and respect for organizational culture differences in change processes. However, if we stop at just diagnosing differences between current and ideal, we run the risk of supporting only stereotypical views on cultures. Our response was to progress from basic cross-cultural awareness training and consulting to developing the global minds of leaders and more beyond.

Therefore, a new metatheory of leadership is needed to tackle how leaders will deal with competing demands that manifest as value dilemmas as a result of cultural transformations. We can infer from our research findings that successful leaders in the current epoch of changing situations and multicultural surroundings need to operate with a people-oriented style in order to accomplish their task successfully. Leaders will have to be participative in order to be able to take autocratic decisions of a higher level. They will have to think logically, fed by a non-logical intuition. Finally, leaders must be very sensitive to each situation in order to make consistent decisions regardless of the situation.

THT's work is unique in that the focus has been to extend research on leadership, giving much greater attention to the reconciliation of differences after the identification of these differences. THT has accumulated a significant body of evidence to show that leaders lead by reconciling values across the whole management spectrum. The new question is therefore to ask what we can do to help leaders make business, and effective change in particular, more effective once we cross cultural or diversity boundaries.

Our solution, in use for over 25 years, was based on this reconciliation of cultural differences. It is a series of behaviours that enable effective interaction with those of contrasting value systems. This approach was supported by the longitudinal research of Professor Dave Ulrich, where Paradox Navigation was identified as one of the most important competencies to be developed (Ulrich et al., 2017).

Why do leaders face such dilemmas, and why are they important? All organizations need consistency and agility, long-term and short-term decisions, tradition, and innovation, planning and laissez-faire, digital and analogue. The challenge for leaders is to fuse these opposites, not to select one extreme at the expense of the other. As a leader you have to inspire as well as listen. As a professional, you need to master your materials, and at the same time be passionately at one with the mission and purpose of the whole organization. You need to apply analytic skills in order to place these contributions in a larger context. You are supposed to prioritise in a meticulous sequence, while parallel processing is in vogue.

You have to develop a winning strategy and at the same time have all the answers to questions in case your strategy misses its goals.

The concept of Servant Leadership

Our recent research confirms our earlier conjecture, namely that the essential distinguishing characteristic of leaders in a multi-cultural environment is their propensity to reconcile seemingly opposing values. In contrast, managers (rather than leaders) seem to have solvable problems – “Next problem please”. Are leaders the “authors” of strategy and policy, or do they orchestrate the necessary participation? Do leaders deal in high-level abstractions or in concrete details? Can a leader be a servant also? Such questions culminate in what is, perhaps, the biggest crisis of the day. Are leaders people hired by shareholders solely to chase profits in their direction, or do they lead a community with a greater purpose?

The view of leadership taken here is that leaders find themselves between conflicting demands and are subject to an endless series of paradoxes and dilemmas. There are non-stop culture clashes, and by culture we mean not simply the cultures of different nations, but those of different disciplines, functions, genders, classes, and so on. With the internationalization of organizations, we find that leaders have to face diverse teams. What style of leadership is effective in those diverse circumstances?

We submit that it requires a set of value-free competencies that we identify as Trans-cultural competence. One of the authors interviewed 21 leaders to provide the underlying schema for his book *21 Leaders for the 21st Century* (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2001). From this evidence we performed an in-depth and critical inductive analysis. Thereby, we identified that the significant and common factor amongst successful leaders today is their competence to reconcile seemingly opposing values of dilemmas that they face on a continuing basis. Given this backdrop, there was support for using Robert Greenleaf's model of Servant Leadership philosophy to underpin this and help facilitate and embed the change. How we designed and delivered the cultural and leadership behavioural change this is set out in the case study that follows.

Case study – AtkinsRéalis Inc. (formerly SNC-Lavalin Inc.) Company context

The Canadian engineering giant AtkinsRéalis (ATRL) employs c. 40,000 people globally and is publicly listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange. The company has undergone significant change over the last decade. In its recent past, the company was known as SNC-Lavalin (SNC-L) and rebranded to AtkinsRéalis in September 2023. The business had started to recover from past legal challenges that SNC-L had faced in 2011 and was reshaping itself through acquisition and divestment to become one of the world leading design, engineering and project management organisations, with nearly 40,000 employees worldwide dedicated to engineering a better future for our planet and its people.

A small number of legacy lump-sum-turnkey (LSTK) projects had caused losses over a period of years. With the advent of a new CEO in 2019, the company was developing a new strategy, refocusing and de-risking the business and planning for future growth. A strategic decision was taken to exit LSTK projects and rebuild the business around its core engineering and nuclear services and major project management. Just as Covid-19 was emerging, the company was exploring options to divest its Oil and Gas operations, and to exit the LSTK sector, thus charting a new path to growth.

By 2020, SNC-Lavalin had transitioned into an execution culture with integrity, risk avoidance and operational delivery as main characteristics to close out the LSTK projects. There was also a parallel challenge emerging for the organization. It now needed to lay the foundations for growth. How could the company reinvent itself and grow again, whilst retaining the elements of its culture that would still be important?

It was apparent this new strategy would require a new, exploratory culture, a new mindset and a new leadership model and behaviours to be successful. Planning the started in earnest, with the culture change project broken into multiple phases.

There was an initial design phase where we set out the major interventions. ensured that culture was to be integrated into all aspects of the change process steps, including the sequencing of those steps:

- The first phase had a diagnostic element where we asked participants to identify the current and the ideal corporate cultures, followed by the development and mapping of the current and desired leadership competencies.
- Phase one concluded with an in-person workshop just as Covid-19 was emerging. We took the leadership team through an introduction to culture, their current and desired cultures, and then the concept and practice of dilemma resolution. To make this 'real' we

workshopped actual operational challenges facing the leadership group.

- Following the workshop, we collected further participant data and elicited a ‘long-list’ of the strategic and cultural dilemmas that the organization needed to address in phase two.
- Phase two concluded with a workshop nearly a year later which focused on the prioritisation and resolution of these higher order, strategic dilemmas, as well as obtaining structured input on the leadership behaviours that senior people believed would support the desired culture. At this point we introduced the concept of Servant Leadership to the management group.
- This was followed by phase three, the final design of the leadership behavioural framework, which was grounded in the prioritized dilemmas.
- The last workshop of phase three focused on bringing Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) to life and tied it to the new desired culture. Participants had a safe space to practice using the behaviours in action learning sets together.

So far, so good. But in order to embed the new behaviours, leaders needed more than just safe-space practice – they needed time for reflection and self-actualisation. To achieve this we looked to the work of Peter Hanke (Hanke, 2013) and world of musical performance to find inspiration and a possible solution. Each of the phases is set out in more detail below.

Phase one – diagnostics and culture and dilemma reconciliation workshop

In the diagnostic phase, we set out to build a picture of the current corporate culture, as perceived by the organisation’s senior leaders, contrasted with what each person would consider to be the ideal corporate culture.

Following the proposed methodology, the management of culture change therefore involves answering:

1. What are the dilemmas that will be faced when seeking to change from the ‘current’ to the ‘ideal’ organizational culture?
2. How can these dilemmas be reconciled successfully?

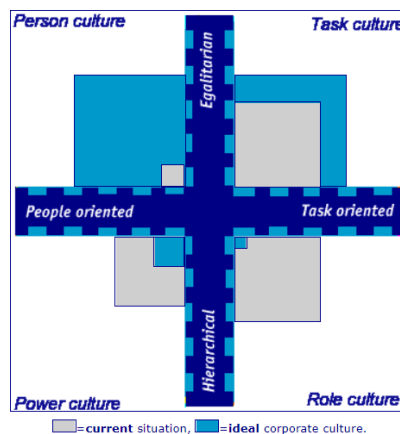
For each of the above scenarios, different dilemmas are to be expected. As pre-work, using web-based ‘interview’ techniques (DilemmaScan), the authors invited c. 50 members of the senior operational leadership group (OLG) who run the company, to elicit, delineate and map their existing dilemmas.

The initial workshop followed, introducing the leadership group to cultural typologies and to the concept and process of basic dilemma reconciliation. We then gave participants time to practice using the methodology to resolve their ‘live’ operational dilemmas. At a basic level this started to inform development of a new leadership framework.

Phase two - the first steps in the change process – defining the culture

The authors then developed a workshop built around these dilemmas for the AtkinsRéalis leadership community. In preparation for what was a half-day session, we analyzed the company’s culture, both current and desired using the results from the culture diagnostic and THT’s Dilemma Scan tool. The results were quite consistent amongst the leadership group: the current culture was a fusion of the *Guided Missile and Eiffel Tower* type cultures. The main characteristics of this fusion were a clearly defined orientation towards executing tasks in a very risk-conscious way, with a focus on delivering on short to medium term performance. The desired culture was clearly articulated as what we have termed a ‘*Guided Incubator*’. This could be characterized by an orientation towards more innovation and personalized accountability around more agile operations, (see Figure 1 below)

Figure 1 – the current vs. desired culture



This map of the current vs. desired culture was further cross-validated by the main dilemmas that the leadership expressed through our dilemma scan set out in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – The organizational dilemmas

Dilemma SNC-Lavalin	
On the one hand ...	On the other hand ...
We need project managers focusing daily on optimizing their projects and managing risks	We need strict and regular, administratively heavy reports on the actual and future performance of the project
We need to identify with their own business unit, taking accountability for the success of their own P&L and team.	We need to have the larger picture in mind to lean in, leverage capability and serve the organization's best interests
We need one person in the position of ownership and responsibility to lead decision making.	We need to have a mandate to drive decision making throughout the organization without ownership or responsibility.
We need a structured delegation of authority, with strong executive oversight, so that each individual/operation knows its level of authority in decision making	We want sectors to innovate and be entrepreneurs, and manage their daily operations
We need to invest in the future to create a long term sustainable and growing business.	We need emphasis on quarterly financial targets which impacts entrepreneurial spirit.
On the one hand we need to be transparent and quick to surface problems	On the other we need to deliver excellent financial results every quarter

Interestingly, many of those dilemmas were expressions of the tension between current and ideal cultures as defined by the leadership of the organization. A second cross-validation was achieved through a further exercise. Participants were asked to describe the current and desired behaviours and culture using an animal metaphor of their choice. Again the summarized results validated the organizational culture scans. The current situation was characterized as being thoughtful but slow to change, having a lack of agility, and more of a focus on the here and now. In contrast, the desired end point was to be organized, working together at pace as a pack for mutual benefit, and to be flexible, adaptable, and purposeful.

Phase three - A new and an old set of leadership competencies

At the end the first dilemma reconciliation workshop, we concluded that the company needed a new style and perhaps even a new philosophy of leadership. We debated extensively the selection of the top 8 competencies that were latent but were made manifest in the last couple of years. These were known as the 'Performance Engine' and were very short-term and execution focused. Whilst these behaviours had helped the organization stabilise itself, they were not what was needed to address the significant growth and innovation challenges ahead. We performed the same analysis on the behaviours needed for the Growth and

Innovation Engine. The results are set out below:

Performance engine

1. Accountability – I take ownership of targets and budgets; set out accountabilities; conscientious; responsible; accept consequences
2. Execution – I seek to deliver flawlessly; align resources and internal processes to drive results
3. Risk-conscious – I weigh up risks and take a cautious approach and measure progress
4. Resilience – I am tenacious and determined; bounce back quickly from set-backs; keep a positive frame of mind
5. Giving direction – I organise work; establish priorities; give clear direction and tell others what to do
6. Operations Focus – I focus on planning; budgeting; organizing and day to day management of operations
7. Performance Focus – I motivate people to perform; measure and monitor progress; take action to rectify issues
8. Diversity – I look for different viewpoints; look for different angles on a situation and ask others for their opinion

Growth/innovation Engine

1. Collaboration – I actively look to network and collaborate with others for the greater good; build trust and respect
2. Entrepreneurship – I actively look to create new business opportunities; capitalize on openings; create new service offerings; high tolerance for failing quickly to learn
3. Innovation – I am curious; bring new ideas and foster new thinking; values novel solutions and new business models Future focused – I push the boundaries and am focused on the bigger picture; always thinking ahead; create a compelling narrative for the future
4. Technology minded – I understand the opportunities to deploy data and technology to create value for clients.
5. Inclusive – I align and engage people with vision and purpose; act as a role model in building a positive, authentic and inclusive culture
6. Decisiveness – I take bold, calculated risks
7. Stakeholder driven – I look to create value propositions centred on the customer; integrate all stakeholders needs to create winning propositions across stakeholder agendas

The immediate challenge for the authors was how to move from the current to the desired set of competencies to initiate the cultural change. It was very apparent that it was sub-optimal to try to ‘do one set at the cost of the other’. The organization had invested heavily to create the performance engine culture. This had delivered positive operational results with the current leadership behaviours addressing the challenges the organization had been navigating. So, work needed to be done to integrate both set of competencies and find a way of breaking from the traditional either/or frameworks. So what were the dilemmas that the leaders faced?

Defining five competency dualities

In order to find out the priorities, a survey was conducted amongst the c. 50 OLG members for the phase two follow-up workshop in 2021. The survey asked the following inputs of the members:

Below you see two sets of eight competencies set out in the form of dualities: eight defining the performance engine and another eight defining the growth and innovation

engine.

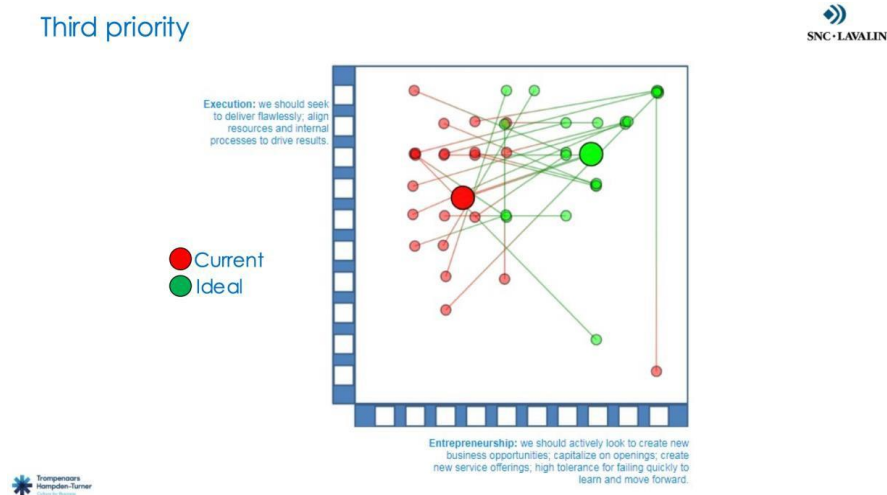
Please select the top three competencies from both lists as they are seen as important for the business success of SNC-Lavalin. Please indicate possible edits to both competencies as well in their behavioural characteristics.

We analysed the feedback of all the priorities and came out with a top five on both sides. Subsequently we presented the results as dualities back to the leadership group with their edits incorporated.

	On the one hand....	On the other hand.....
1	Reliable Performance Today: we must motivate people to perform; measure and monitor progress; take action to rectify issues.	Delivering the Future: we should push the boundaries and be focused on the bigger picture; always seeking to over perform; and to create a compelling narrative for the future
2	Individual Accountability: we need to take ownership of targets and budgets; set out accountabilities; be conscientious; responsible; accept consequences.	Collaboration: we need to network and collaborate proactively with others for the greater good; build trust and respect.
3	Execution: we should seek to deliver flawlessly; align resources and internal processes to drive results.	Entrepreneurship: we should actively look to create new business opportunities; capitalize on openings; create new service offerings; high tolerance for failing quickly to learn and move forward.
4	Risk-conscious: we must weigh up risks and take a cautious approach and measure progress	Innovation: we should be curious to bring new ideas and foster new thinking; values novel solutions and new business models; innovate quickly.
5	Consistent delivery: we must ensure our activities are established, reliable and stable to create assurance for clients.	Agile delivery: we must use experimentation and fast learning to rapidly deploy solutions, and exploit the opportunities to use data and technology to create value for clients.

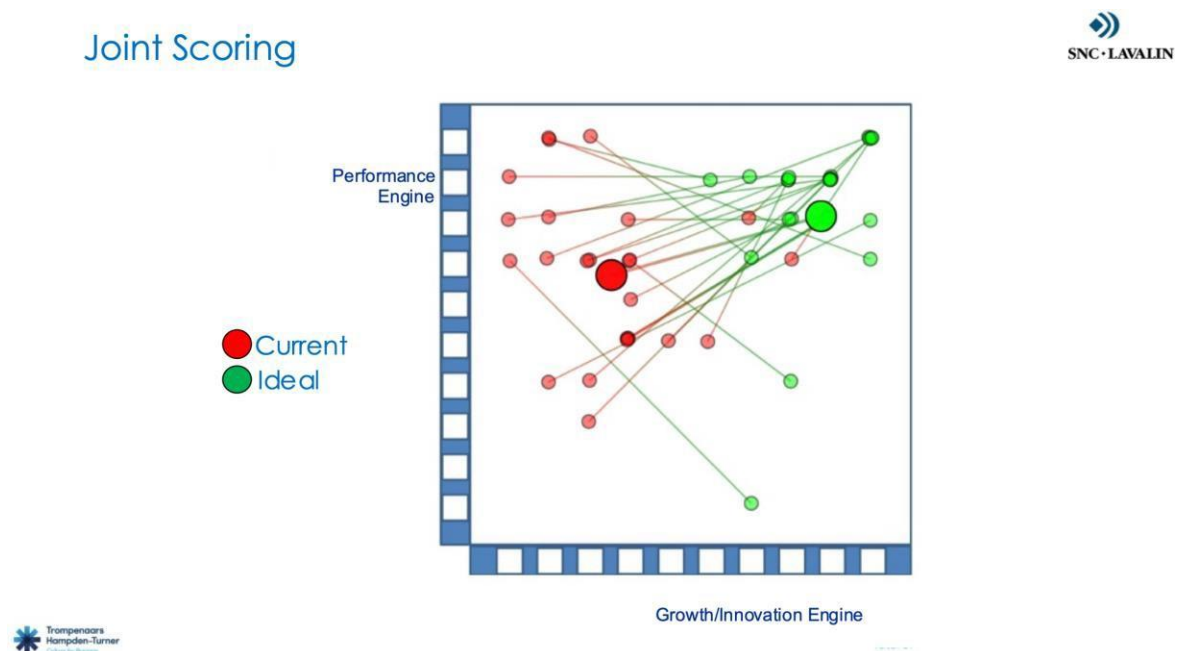
At the same time, we surveyed how each member rated themselves on current and desired behaviours of these dualities.

The results for the third duality between execution and entrepreneurship are set out below in Figure 3:



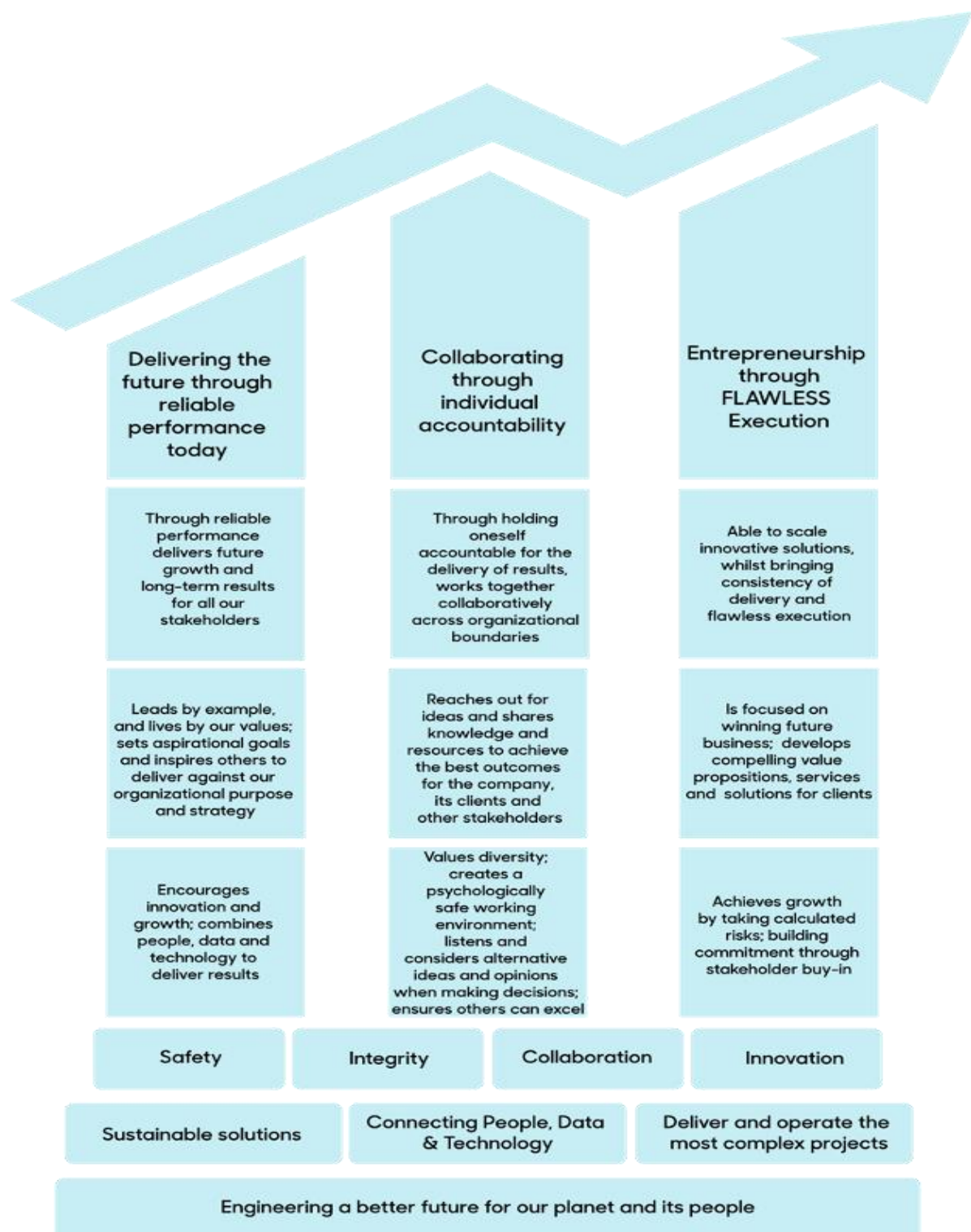
In the example above, it is quite clear that the participants more or less agreed that their behaviours were quite strong on the execution side, but they needed to develop the entrepreneurial side. This was true for most of the other dualities. If we take an average of all three dualities, we see a similar picture in Figure 4 below, Joint Scoring, where there is a gap from the current cluster to the desired cluster:

Figure 4 – Results for the fourth duality between Performance Engine and Growth / Innovation



The feedback from the data that we collected increased the awareness for the need to change towards an exploring and growing culture, without throwing away what has carefully built in the execution space. In the process of change, there was significant support for developing a leadership set of behaviours that would get the organization from an executing to an exploring growth engine. This was summarized with development of the final leadership behavioural framework, which is set out below in Figure 5.

Figure 5 : Leadership Behavioural Framework – Purpose, Values and Behaviours



Practicing Servant Leadership

The final workshop, ‘Servant Leadership and you as a ‘leader’ was focused on really understanding and practicing the leadership behaviours in groups. Greenleaf (1977) described Servant Leadership as the servant-leader is servant first. After discussing the empirical evidence for the importance and effectiveness of Servant Leadership, we focused the workshop on developing participants’ understanding of its ten principles: listening; empathy;

healing; awareness; persuasion; conceptualization; foresight; stewardship; commitment to the growth of people; and building community. Each principle was further defined and the participants were asked to rate themselves along a continuum from 'Always' to 'Sometimes' to 'Never' and then write down examples of their behavior. In small groups they shared their findings, sought feedback from their peers, and discussed strategies for personal improvement. This workshop in itself was not sufficient to embed the experience for participants. To bring to life the servant leadership behaviours at a participant level needed a very personal experience – one that facilitated self-actualisation.

Learning from the world of musical performance

Peter Hanke's book (Hanke, 2008), translated as "Extracts from Performance & Leadership", connects the world of musical performance with that of executive leadership in order to discuss the creation of a special learning environment. This was the inspiration for the next intervention. Both worlds require results to be delivered, but with very different metrics and reward structures. Both worlds require mastery, ambition, motivation, and personal drive to be successful. Both have leaders, specialists, and team players for the greater enterprise to function optimally. So, what lessons could executives learn about performance from the world of music that would help them on their servant leadership journey?

Working with Conductor Roger Nierenberg of 'The Music Paradigm', was an intervention designed to achieve exactly this. Having finalized the leadership competency framework, the OLG were put into a different setting - they were invited into a room to sit amongst musicians in a makeshift orchestra that Roger had assembled for us on the day. In the role of conductor, Roger then illustrated the power of the Servant Leader. Various, the orchestra are conducted from brilliantly to badly, with micro-management, disinterest, favouritism, and absent leadership apparent amongst the observed behaviours.

The executive observers know what good sounds like from the first short performance, so they get to understand the impact of the conductor on the players when things don't go so well. The musicians were not briefed what to expect other than they would be playing the same piece of music different ways. In the session they are put of the spot and asked by the conductor why they are playing as they are, either as an individual or as a section of the

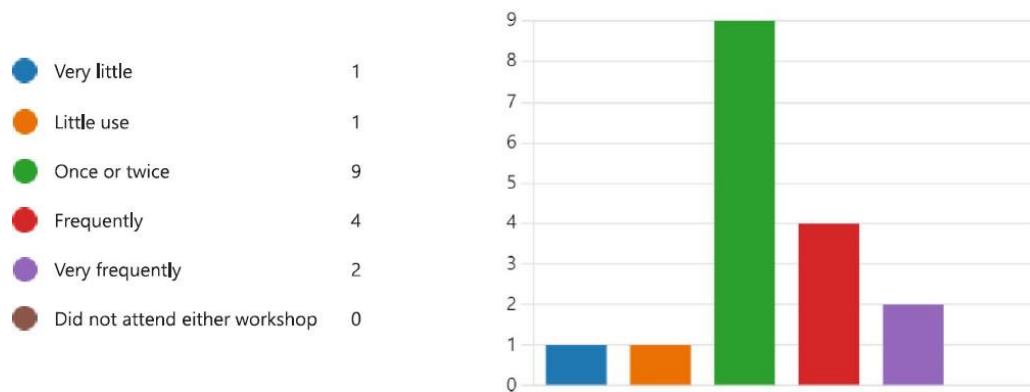
orchestra. Their answers flushed out the conductor's micro-management behaviour, the apparent favouritism, the disinterest, and the lack of leadership. The musicians explained what they did to compensate individually and as a newly formed team. Micro-management meant the players simply did what they were asked, nothing more, nothing less, but with no enthusiasm. Disinterest was met with boredom in playing. Favoritism annoyed sections of the orchestra. An absence of leadership was met with coping via the 'appointment', literally in micro-seconds, of the first violin as the new 'leader'. The executives were also encouraged to move seats to different areas of the orchestra to listen to the sound and understand the impact of where you sit in the team and the management hierarchy. By listening to the feedback and observing the experiences of the musicians to the conductor's leadership behaviours, participants internalise what is required to be an effective servant leader before taking it back into their own workplace with their appointed 'buddy'. After 6 months, participants completed a further follow up questionnaire designed to explore which areas of servant leadership were working well for them, and where they needed further help. The results can be summarized as follows:

Feedback on Dilemma Reconciliation and Servant Leadership

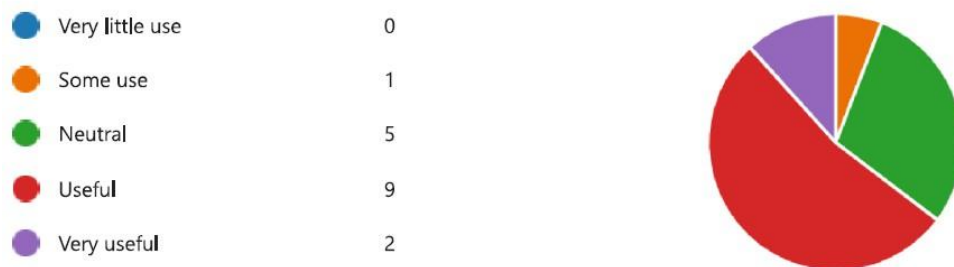
Though it is still too early to draw conclusions about the sustainability of the results

of the interventions, the first impressions have given encouraging feedback. This should also be seen in the context of the fairly critical attitude of the ‘top of the house’ and relatively little experience with interventions of this nature. A variety of questions were asked, and the results were as follows:

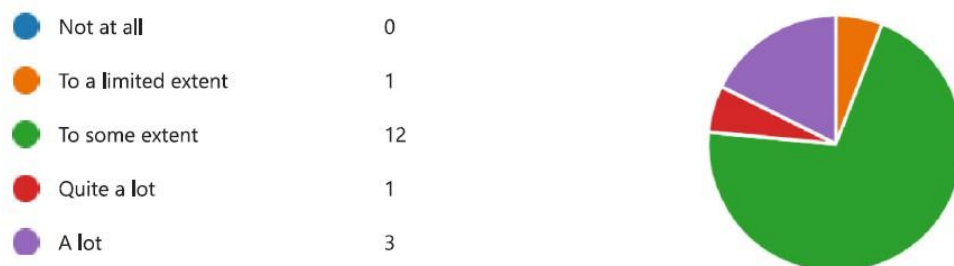
How much have you used the dilemma resolution process since the Bangalore or UK workshops?



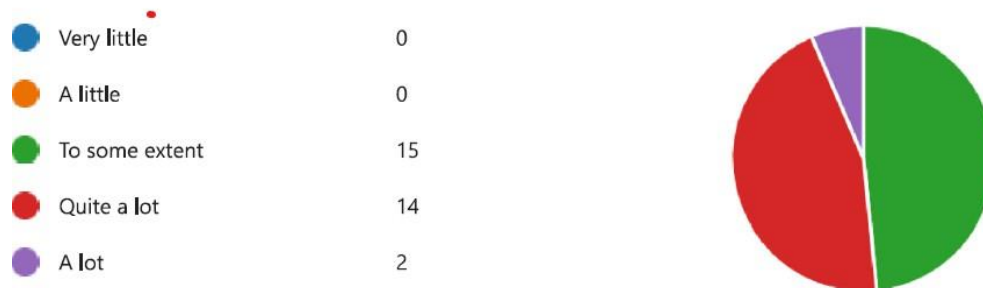
How useful did you find the dilemma resolution process?



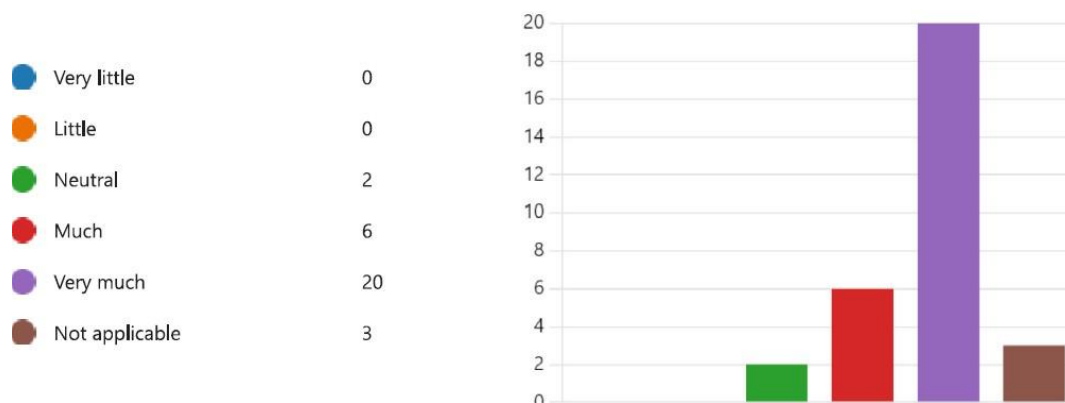
To what extent has dilemma resolution helped you look at problems differently?



To what extent do you feel you have improved on your personal journey to being a Servant Leader?



. Music Paradigm - OLG 28 September 2022 Washington



The results have led to the conclusion that more should be invested in Servant Leadership development.

Leadership Development at AtkinsRéalís

At AtkinsRéalís there is a strong belief in the power of Leadership development. In the first leg of behavioural change towards the Performance Engine, significant investment was made in the development of leaders. And it has produced a positive return. In a variety of bespoke programmes run with Oxford Said Business School in the UK, attention was focused on the development of the first eight competencies. As the programme has evolved, the participants are given an introduction to the essence of servant leadership and they work on the reconciliation of the dualities. The output has been very encouraging, generating action-driven initiatives.

Following this successful introduction, HR have worked on scaling up the Servant Leadership initiatives to larger groups of leaders by including a hybrid learning approach combining e-learning and interactive face-to-face and virtual sessions. The e-learning contains two customized modules:

1. Dilemma Reconciliation Competence
2. Introduction into Servant Leadership

These virtual sessions are designed to provide AtkinsRéalís' leaders and managers with a forum to explore the modern relevance and strength of servant-leadership approach across the globe. Participants are challenged to reflect on their own leadership styles and behaviour, to identify areas for growth, and to practice new behaviours/techniques to bring

the best out of their employees and organization complemented by the Dilemma Reconciliation Process. They have to consider the main challenges they are facing; how can these challenges be overcome; how can they frame these challenges into dilemmas. Once they have navigated this, they then reflect together on what was difficult to overcome; what worked well in driving to reconciliation; and what has inspired them to find solutions for their part of the organisation?

Key participant outcomes were:

- To develop an understanding of the strength of servant-leadership, as both mindset and practice when working globally
- To help the participant gain insight regarding their own leadership skills and approach
- To raise the competence and capacity of leaders to deal with complex cross-cultural situations
- To develop leadership competence and a consistent language and approach to reconciling dilemmas

Measuring and monitoring progress

We have developed a variety of monitoring progress activities ranging from individual to organizational levels.

Individual level

We have developed a Servant Leadership profiler assessment tool to measure whether the individual is making progress on his or her servant leadership competencies – specifically on recognising, respecting, reconciling, and realizing dilemmas. The profiler is an App and it explores the dilemmas of leadership as expressed in the 5 dualities and the questions to assess yourself as a Servant Leader. It measures a participant's behaviour as a leader within the Servant Leadership model. The tool also includes a 360 version so the feedback is grounded in a team's reality.

What is the leader output?

This App enables leaders to quickly assess their own propensity to reconcile the dilemmas of leadership and gives them some personalized data-driven feedback based on THT's extensive research and consulting practice.

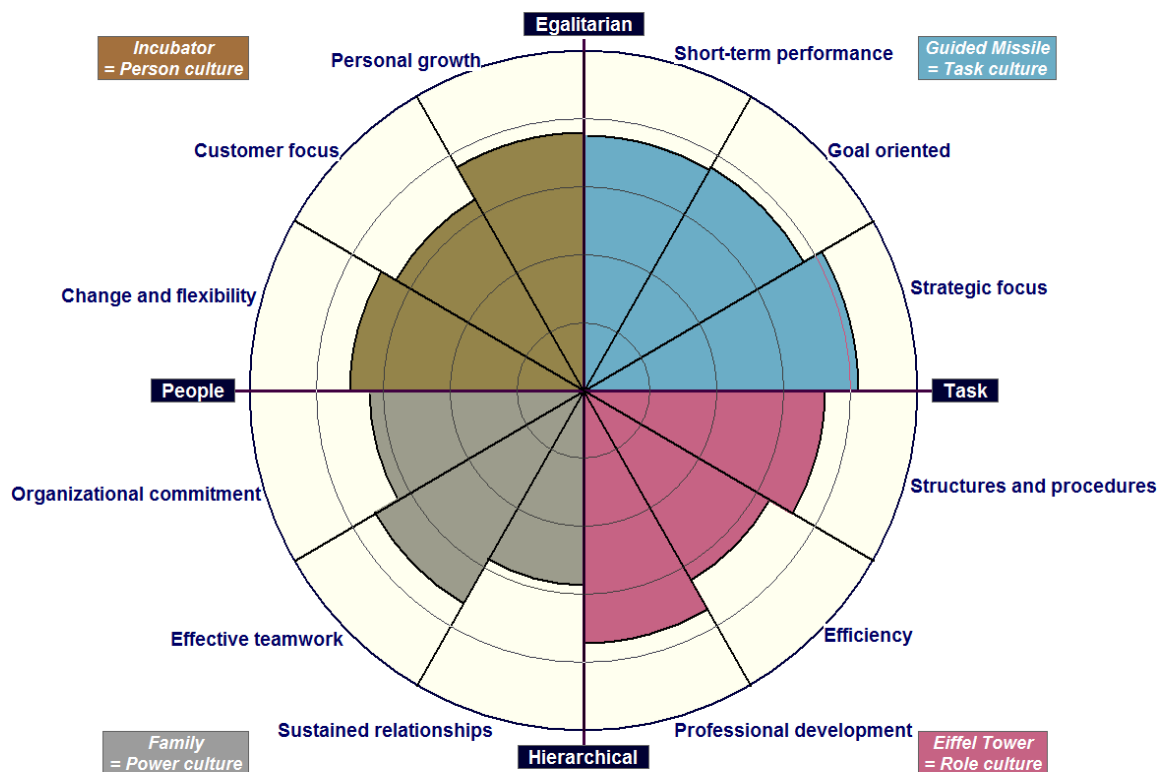
Alongside the profiler we have a more generic Intercultural Competence profiler. This App is used to benchmark inter-cultural competence under Recognition, Respect, Reconciliation and Realization and aims to give guidance to leaders in a multi-cultural environment. It provides insight into respondents' perception of their intercultural competence to reconcile dilemmas, based on how well they understand other cultural orientations and deal with competing demands.

Organisational Level

Using the Culture Scan diagnostic tool (see Figure 6 below), we assess how opposites are combined between execute and explore and we are able to measure to what extent the interventions have had effect on the culture. By comparing a measurement and report

(together with AtkinsRéalis' existing data) before, during and after the program we can assess progress against the defined baseline and visually highlight areas that still need attention.

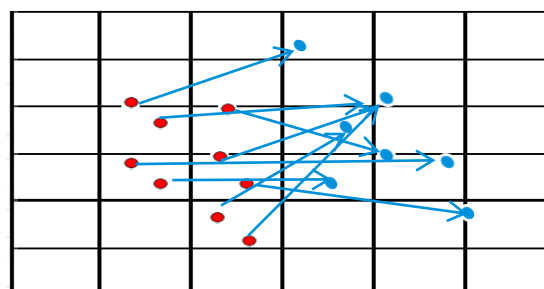
Figure 6 Culture Scan



We also monitor progress on how the major dilemmas are reconciled (see figure 7 below). This is the core of the change process being monitored: how your current perceived cultural strengths are enriched by their opposites (e.g. how is your push culture enriched by the client-oriented pull culture; how are your local strengths reconciled with global standards).

Figure 7

We strive for
Risk- Consciousness



We need to offer innovative solutions

Measuring Servant Leadership behaviours

Since 2019, IPSOS has run 4 of AtkinsRéalis' 'Vox' global all-staff surveys to track employee engagement through c. 60 specific questions. The bespoke survey is managed independently of the company and uses consistent questions to measure year on year progress. The table below sets out how the Vox items matched up to some of the dimensions of Servant Leadership and shows independent progress measures from 2019 (pre-programme) to 2023 and the impact of the work described in this article.

Servant Leadership dimension	Vox Engagement Survey Item	2019 score	2023 score	Impact score
Commitment to the Growth of People Servant-leaders are deeply committed to a personal, professional, and spiritual growth of each and every individual within the organization	My immediate manager gives me regular feedback on my performance	77	81	+4
	My immediate manager challenges me in a constructive way	80	85	+5
	My immediate manager helps me fulfil my potential	80	86	+6
	AtkinsRéalis is good at developing employees to their utmost potential	69	74	+5
	At AtkinsRéalis, people are given opportunities to grow, whatever their background is	80*	84	+4
Listening Servant-leaders seek to identify and clarify the will of a group. They seek to listen receptively to what is being and said (and not said).	My immediate manager empowers me	81	89	+8
	I feel able to discuss any issues or new ideas with my immediate manager	90	93	+3
Healing Learning to heal is a powerful force for transformation and integration. One of the great strengths of servant-leadership is the potential for the search for wholeness	My immediate manager supports my wellbeing and mental health	90*	91	+1
Building Community Servant-leaders seek to identify a means for building community among those who work within a given institution.	In my team we have a positive working atmosphere	89	93	+4
	I am treated with fairness and respect	85	93	+8
	I feel valued and recognized for the work I do	73	82	+9
	My immediate manager trusts me to organize my work, regardless of where I do it	92*	96	+4

*2021 data, as introduced as a new question in 2021

Whilst there are undoubtedly other factors that will have influenced manager behaviour on some of the items above, (such as better tracking of appraisal completion), it is clear that overall employees are reporting an observed increase in positive behaviours related to Servant Leadership.

Continuing the journey

AtkinsRéalis has successfully navigated this cultural and leadership change journey and has pivoted to a growth phase of the business in 2023. The business now successfully delivers complex engineering services, and major project and program management across the built and natural environment in seven end markets: transportation; buildings and places; defence; industrial and mining; water, power, and renewables; and nuclear.

Moving beyond the change - implementing Servant Leadership in actual behaviours

Having invested time, money, and emotion in reconciling your dilemmas, adapting your leadership behaviours, and making a culture shift, what tools will help you maintain and evolve it further? In practice there are some great examples how through HR-led interventions from recruitment, appraisal to rewards.

Appraisal – making work meaningful

In the late nineties Motorola introduced an interesting process to stimulate a dialogue between boss and subordinate under the title Individual Dignity Entitlement. This was a granular process to ensure work was meaningful for employees and where it wasn't, it fell directly to the manager to address the problem. A number of times a year a dialogue unfolded around six important questions, such as: 'Is the work you do meaningful?' 'And: 'Do you have enough resources to fulfill your tasks?' Yes or no are the alternative answers. With 'yes' as an answer, there is no dialogue, but with 'no' there has to be a dialogue about how to get yes in the next period. What made it special was the fact that it ultimately was the boss's responsibility to make it into a 'yes' the next period. There was no choice other than to become a servant leader.

This system proved not only to be an excellent tool that led to relevant conversations between boss and subordinate, but also produced a number of quantifiable yes's and no's. In short, it worked well in the United States, where transparency and quantifiability have a motivating effect. But how to explain a score of 98% yes in South Korea, and on a site where the local chip production was anything but successful? After a number of interviews with the local managers, it quickly became clear that they appreciated the system introduced by the head office. Why only yes or no? In South Korea, culturally the acceptable answer to the leader is always yes. Why was there a need to measure and publish those yes and no answers? However, the quality of the underlying philosophy of leaders serving was praised. In parts of Asia the system was introduced with similar questions. But the dichotomous yes / no has been replaced by a scale, so the 90% yes is a subtle indicator for the Korean no. To prevent the loss of the face of the results by the department are not revealed to the public.

AtkinsRéalis have introduced this into the personal development review appraisal process (PDR) as part of the mid-year career development discussion element. It is a further process 'crutch' to help managers operationalize the servant leadership journey.

Reward & Recognition

Appraisal and reward systems attract lots of attention in the management literature. "How can I best motivate and retain my top people, and how can I effectively provide feedback on their performance?" It is striking just how many research findings have shown that money is not the main motivating factor at all: Rather it is a so-called "dissatisfier." A second assumption of most reward systems is that one has to motivate the individual. A generally Western assumption where you retain the individual reward system. In Asia or Scandinavia you can motivate people by a team reward structure. This is the difference between individualistic and collectivist cultures. But what would a servant leader do that leads a diverse team of individualists and team-oriented persons?

Consider the discussion of reward systems in cross-cultural JV at Shell in Amsterdam. An experiment with the 1700 staff in the research and development division was based on the joining together of creative individual researchers of different nationalities. In the space of a year, the 20 percent variable pay was evenly distributed over individual and team bonuses. The individual bonus was given to the person chosen by the team as the best team player. The team bonus went to the team that excelled in supporting individual creativity. The Shell researchers from Amsterdam competed for the best cooperation in Teams, and they worked together in order to compete better.

Another recent example concerns the advice that the consultant Gallway gave to IBM's sales force. Instead of those who sold the most personal computers receiving a bonus, which placed stress on the sales person and the client, Gallway suggested an alternative. Every quarter sales people made a presentation of what they had learned from their customers, and collected the bonus. Sales figures rose by 25 percent, the clients were satisfied, and information was exchanged between the sales people. This, again, is co-opetition: competing for the cooperation with the client. The best sales staff, we later learned, were those who learned most from their clients.

In short, reward systems can help the servant leader reconcile one of the most challenging dilemmas of individual performance and team cooperation. But it's not all about the money. In the world of the Servant Leader, recognition of those around you is key.

ATRL introduced an online global recognition system, working in partnership with Workhuman. Christened as #WOW, the platform allows managers and peers to recognize colleagues in the moment on a social platform. Recognition can be financial in the form of points or specific rewards, or else as a non-monetary #Thankyou. The recognitions are spread across the organisations social networks and visible to all, in turn attracting comment and further recognition. The company has created a virtuous circle. Tracking recognition data in turn had a proven impact on attrition and a person's likelihood of leaving is significantly reduced if the received two or more peer / manager recognitions in a year. Four recognitions – a combination of financial and non-financial, is a further tipping point for retention, reducing the likelihood of leaving by 5 times compared to employees with no recognitions. Importantly, the propensity to stay is not increased by financial recognition alone.

Recruitment – ensuring values match.

THT has developed and implemented a global diagnostic tool for assessing the cultural fit between the recruitee and recruiter. It enables an organization to evaluate in a different and objective way the alignment of the value set of the recruitee with the organisational values as represented by the recruiter. It measures three elements in the process: the value set of the candidate, the value set of the hiring organization and the willingness and competence of the candidate to reconcile the differences. The tool has opened the discussion of implementing the basic idea of servant leadership as reconciling the dilemmas between current and ideal. And it has also opened a discussion in HR that alignment of values needs to be more than sophisticated cloning.

Conclusion

This case study illustrates the operationalisation of a paradigmatic shift from traditional leadership models towards a 'Duality Leadership Model' that emphasizes the reconciliation of competency dilemmas cross-culturally. This approach is not merely about balancing these dilemmas but about transcending them to foster a culture that integrates execution with exploration and growth. The emphasis on 'through-through thinking' is particularly crucial. It suggests a leadership style that perpetually navigates through competing values, which is essential for sustaining change and fostering an adaptive

organizational culture. This aligns with the Trompenaars Hampden-Turner model of integrating and reconciling cultural differences rather than merely identifying or adapting to them.

The introduction of Servant Leadership is another critical component of the cultural change. It shifts the focus from command-and-control leadership to a more inclusive, empathetic leadership style that supports and grows with the team. This is not just a theoretical adjustment but a practical one, as evidenced by the structured implementation steps provided in the article. The integration of Servant Leadership aligns with the need for leaders to be facilitators of change, not just directors.

Furthermore, the use of musical performance as a metaphor and practical tool for understanding leadership dynamics has been both innovative and telling. It illustrates the necessity for harmony and responsiveness within the leadership framework, mirroring the dynamic and sometimes improvisational nature of managing a complex, global organization.

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