

TRANSITION INTO A DEEPER JOURNEY - INPUT

INTRODUCTION

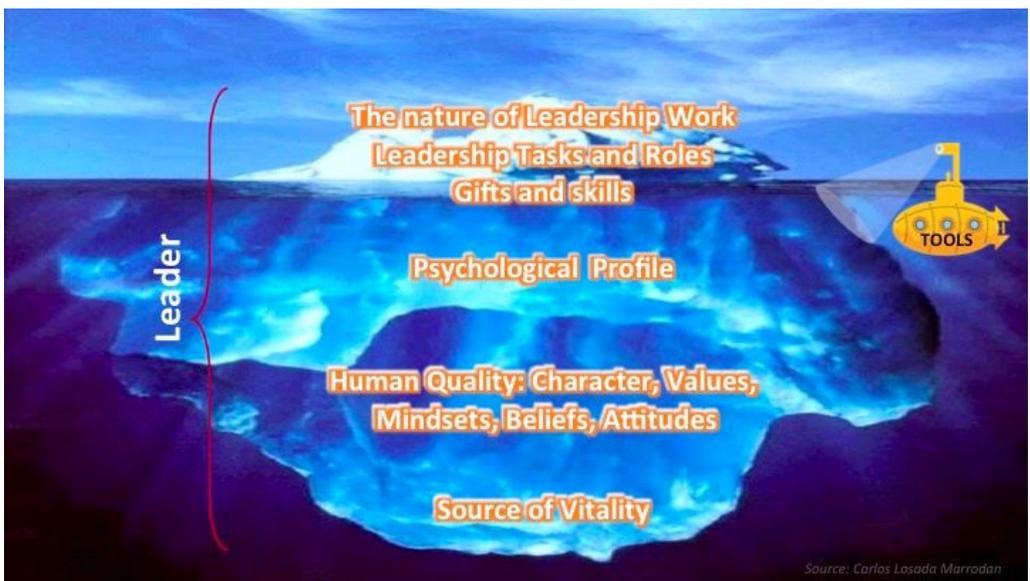
The previous sections have invited participants to reflect on their agenda and leadership roles and tasks, recognize their preferred leadership styles while remaining open to the need of being adaptable, and identify the key competencies and strengths they bring to their functions and mission.

While gaining insights on the above is a key step in responding to our leadership call in an effective and purposeful way, taking the time to recognize less visible influences that are behind our external behaviour is as important. This includes among others looking into our mental models and ways of interpreting the world, our motivation and intentions, our personal traits, our character attributes, our core values and our sense of purpose.

FRAMEWORK

A very simple way of illustrating the approach to understanding ourselves is offered in the below framework. We are currently exploring the deeper levels of the iceberg in the image below, the less visible (and often hidden) parts of who we are. In addition to numerous existing tools, the practices suggested in the Exercise section help us see into these deeper areas. These tools include:

- Profiling Tools: MBTI / Enneagram / Global Leadership Profile / The big 5 model
- Ladder of Inference
- Perspective Taking and the Integral Model
- The practice of Action Inquiry and Triple Loop Awareness
- Value clarification exercise



MAIN IDEAS

The necessity to pause and reflect about our behaviour

In today's fast paced world, leaders often find themselves in over their heads, stuck in overwhelming agendas and requests for fire-fighting, unable to pause and intentionally look into their thinking and decision-making processes.

Research pointed out that mindset failure is one of the biggest drivers for why executives fail. Finkelstein, S. (2004). The complexity of our time is calling for an unprecedented leadership capacity that goes beyond our knowledge and skills: unless we grow our consciousness and develop our mental complexity we will not be able to navigate today's environment.

Practically, this means we need to become more aware of our own thinking and reasoning, put our understanding about the world into perspective, examine the assumptions and beliefs we hold and be willing to replace them with more adequate ones.

In addition to "thinking about our thinking", growing our awareness to the hidden affective dimension of our life plays a significant role in the way we lead and make decisions. As human beings, we have the capacity to focus our attention on certain aspects while excluding many such as emotions, thoughts, perceptions, to which we are not always present, but that still constitute internal forces moving us. (See: Fr. Franz Meures S.J's conference given in Dobogoko, Hungary, in October 2006 - The Affective Dimension of Discerning and Deciding).¹

Insights and tools to facilitate the inner journey

As we are venturing in less familiar terrains, we need to remind ourselves of the importance of:

- keeping an open disposition
- developing courage to embrace our vulnerabilities and becoming more aware
- growing in generosity to share our insights
- developing humility to put our thinking into perspective and doubt
- cultivating curiosity to learn from others
- having faith that we are not doing this alone.

These dispositions and attitudes will facilitate sharing our assumptions and reasoning with others, remaining open to explore their views, encouraging them to share different perspectives that could inform our way of thinking and enable us to learn together. For more insights on this refer to Peter Senge's - The Fifth Discipline (1990).

Many tools and frameworks can shed light into the ways we think. We invite you to explore them one at a time, while taking the time to apply them to your challenges and daily situations and savor the insights that each model provides.

The challenge is not in "understanding" the tools, but integrating them into our ways of being and allowing the insights they generate to shape our understanding of the world (meaning making) and eventually our behaviour. After some time you will identify those models, frameworks, and tools that help you the most and discard those that are less helpful.

IGNATIAN NOTE

Ever since Ignatius could not move from his bed after his leg injury in war, he began to understand the idea that there was a deeper part in his being that he had never realised before, there was more to him and to others than what meets the eye. His discovery of **discernment** (the ability to appraise the movements felt in the heart and weighed by the mind) was a key element in facilitating his conversion, and subsequently guided his future actions and decisions.

As he began to notice and understand his inner movements (noticing where he was interiorly touched and what was his reaction) he was able to intuit the importance of this dynamic. He often took the time to repeat the process.

“... I will repeat the first and second exercises, noting and dwelling upon the points where I have felt greater consolation or desolation, or greater spiritual relish.” (Ex 62)²

This interiority and deep awareness are relevant to our life and leadership practice. They are facilitated by practices of silence, examen, meditation and contemplation as well as repetition which allow us to first notice our interior motions (emotions, thoughts,...) and feel them, then to go deeper and understand them to be able later on to make a decision.

Additional resources are offered in the [Exercises and Integration](#) sections.

EXPECTED LEARNINGS AND OUTCOMES

1. Summarizing previous concepts and outlining future steps in a summary framework
2. Digging deeper into the need for self-understanding
3. Introducing tools to facilitate awareness of mental models and knowledge of oneself

“The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.”

Carl Rogers

[1] Franz Meures - [The affective dimension of Discerning and Deciding](#)

[2] Saint Ignatius of Loyola Personal Writings - J.A. Munitiz & P. Endean (2004) - Penguin Classics