

Change management: success has to do with people.



Change management can become one of leaders' worst nightmares. On the one hand, it is a great source of potential value creation. On the other hand, it is one of the areas where leaders fail more frequently. Traditional approaches used to be very much a top-down exercise, whereas, today's most innovative approaches propose a shift of focus: to engage corporate energy towards developing people, rather than top-down mechanistic solutions.

During my career, I have experienced the limits of traditional approaches, while developing my interest for putting people minds at the centre of change management efforts. Before becoming a Professor, I was a consultant at McKinsey & Co. and I had the chance to be involved in some of the most important corporate change projects of the time. We were probably considered the best strategic consulting firm. Nevertheless, I started to realise that, defining a great strategic plan, it was not where most of the value creation lies in practice. Having big organisations implementing a new strategy, it was a much bigger challenge. Furthermore, consultants face another important complication. When defining a new strategy, ideally, a consultant works hand-in-hand with management; but in the case such cooperation is not

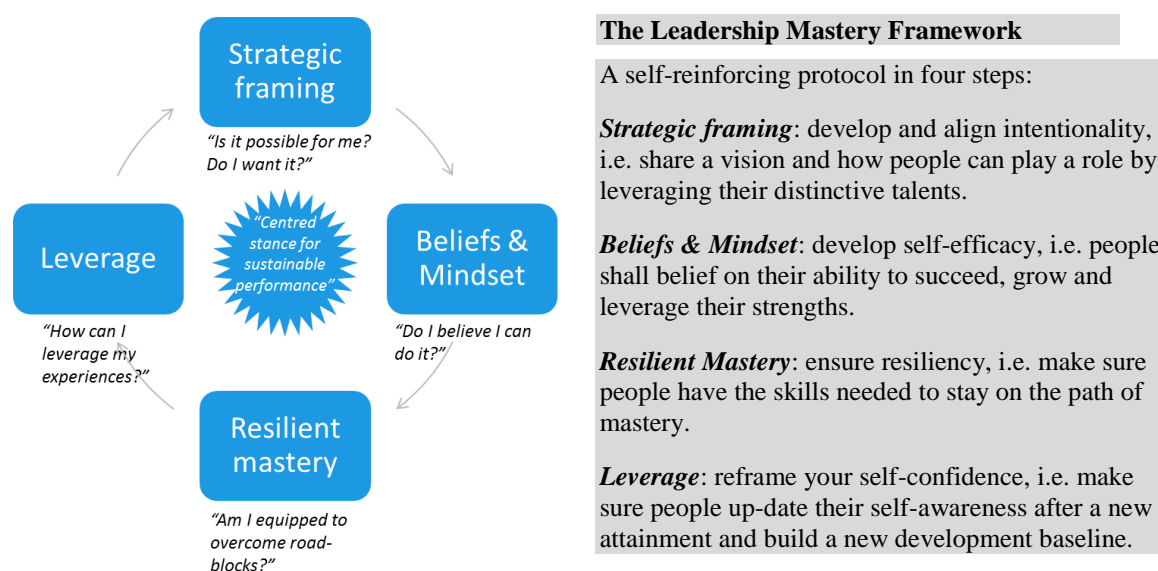
available or possible, you can do it on your own. In some cases, such as hostile M&A bids, it is often the case. On the contrary, when implementing a new strategy, it is virtually impossible to do it without management cooperation. Consultants can help, facilitate and support, but at the end of the day it is up-to the management to do it.

When I became a Professor, I dedicated a great deal of my research time to understand the state of the art of Academy to this regard. There is indeed a lot of knowledge out there on the topic, but most of it considers leaders as gardeners, who "grow plants by pulling them out of the soil", rather than gardeners, who pour water and fertilisers, for having plants eventually grow on their own. Finally, I have found what I was looking for. A branch of the Academy at the cross-road between management and psychology, which has studied human psychology and behaviour, with the objective of developing management practices. The good news is that, today such knowledge it is not confined only in the Academy anymore; on the contrary enlightened leaders have started to make good use of it with brilliant results. Some key concepts are already of public domain, such the great work of Daniel Goleman on Emotional Intelligence or the outstanding insights of the Nobel Price Daniel Kahneman on the functioning of human brain. Other concepts are not yet of public domain, but they can be as powerful.

Nevertheless, something was still missing. I could find a number of effective approaches for developing people minds in a context of change, very much in line with the good "gardener" approach. But, if I put myself in the shoes of a manager facing a concrete change management situation, that was not enough. An exhaustive and coherent framework was still missing, a sort of checklist or a guide for management activity. Here comes my personal contribution, where I have blended my research and 20 years of practice supporting international leaders. More specifically, I have developed the Leadership Mastery Framework (LMF), a coherent framework, structured over four corner stones, which managers use as guide for successful change management. Each corner stone includes capability pillars, i.e. about twenty capabilities, which management shall make sure that are

developed enough, given their objectives of change. Of course, context may vary from case to case; therefore, people may need support with one capability, while they are strong enough with another. For this reason, the LMF comes with an assessment, which can guide management to identify where to focus **THEIR** energy and which tools to use for making sure people's minds are fit for the challenge ahead of them. The final objective is to make sure people are determined to change, they believe it is possible, they believe they can do it, that they are equipped with the necessary skills to overcome road blocks and finally can leverage each development step as a baseline for further personal growth.

Here is an highlight of the Leadership Mastery Framework:



By Roberto Quaglia, Professor of Strategy and Management at ESCP Europe in Paris

To learn more about Leadership Mastery Framework, come to [UXCON16](#) in Brescia, Italy on Sep. 30, where I will talk about the state of the art of the practice and share examples about its application in companies.

Tickets are available at <http://www.uxcon.com/register>

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Roberto is a Professor of Strategy and Management at ESCP Europe in Paris. His background blends three cornerstones: extensive experience as an academic, as a former consultant at McKinsey and Co. and as an executive with various international enterprises. Roberto supports leaders internationally, with consulting, teaching and keynote speeches. He is passionate at dealing with challenges related to change, leadership development and strategy. www.roborto-quaglia.com