RESILIENCE
SELF-CONFIDENCE
COLLABORATION
COMPASSION
DEVELOPING OTHERS
EMPATHY
OPTIMISM
ENTHUSIASM
EMOTIONAL CONTROL
LEADING
PERSUASIVENESS
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
COURAGE
DECISIVENESS
STRATEGIC MINDEDNESS
EFFICIENCY
DETAIL ORIENTATION
FLEXIBILITY
CRITICAL THINKING
CREATIVITY
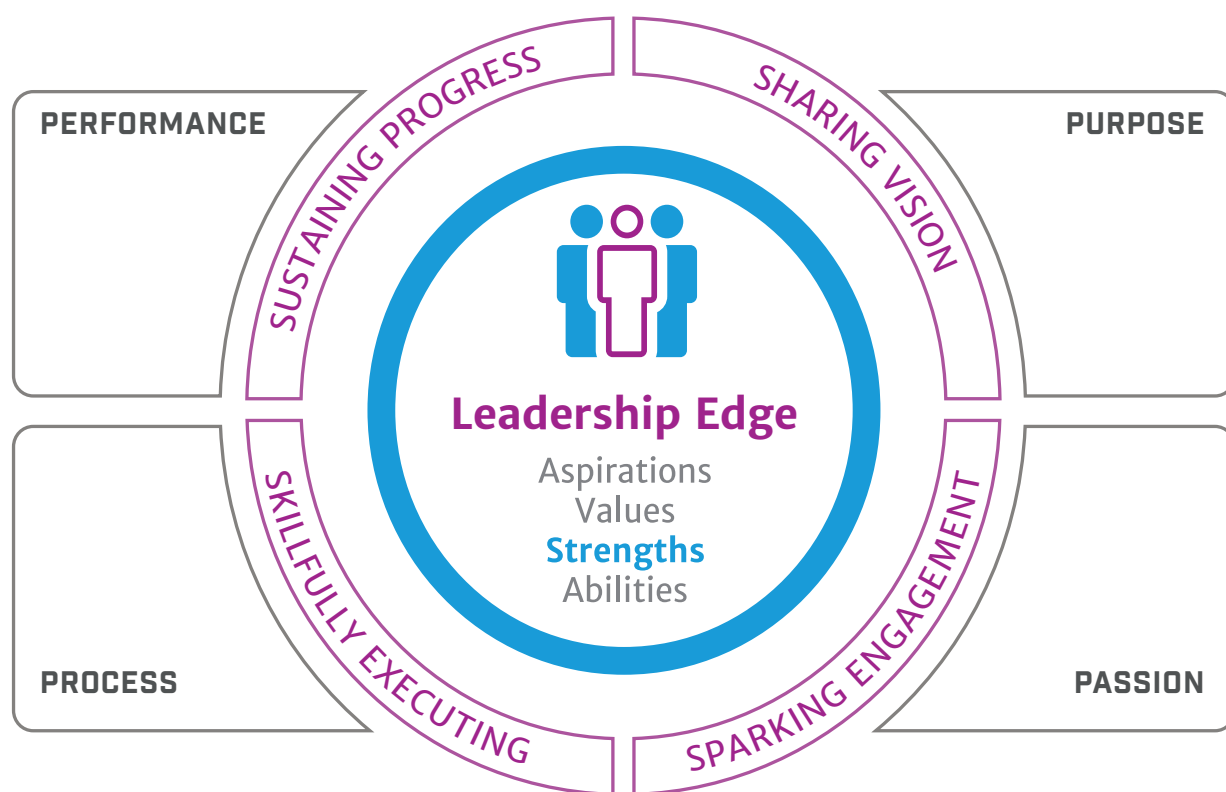COMMON SENSE
SELF-IMPROVEMENT
RESULTS FOCUS
INITIATIVE

S

Strengthscope Leader™

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH INTO THE 4 LEADERSHIP HABITS

STRENGTHSCOPELEADER™: SUMMARY OF RESEARCH INTO THE 4 LEADERSHIP HABITS

Extensive independent, peer reviewed research together with our own research supports the

4 leadership habits we have incorporated into our StrengthscopeLeader™ model below.

PERFORMANCE

SUSTAINING PROGRESS

SHARING VISION

PURPOSE

Leadership Edge

Aspirations
Values
Strengths
Abilities

SKILLFULLY EXECUTING

SPARKING ENGAGEMENT

PROCESS

PASSION

Leadership edge

Leadership habits

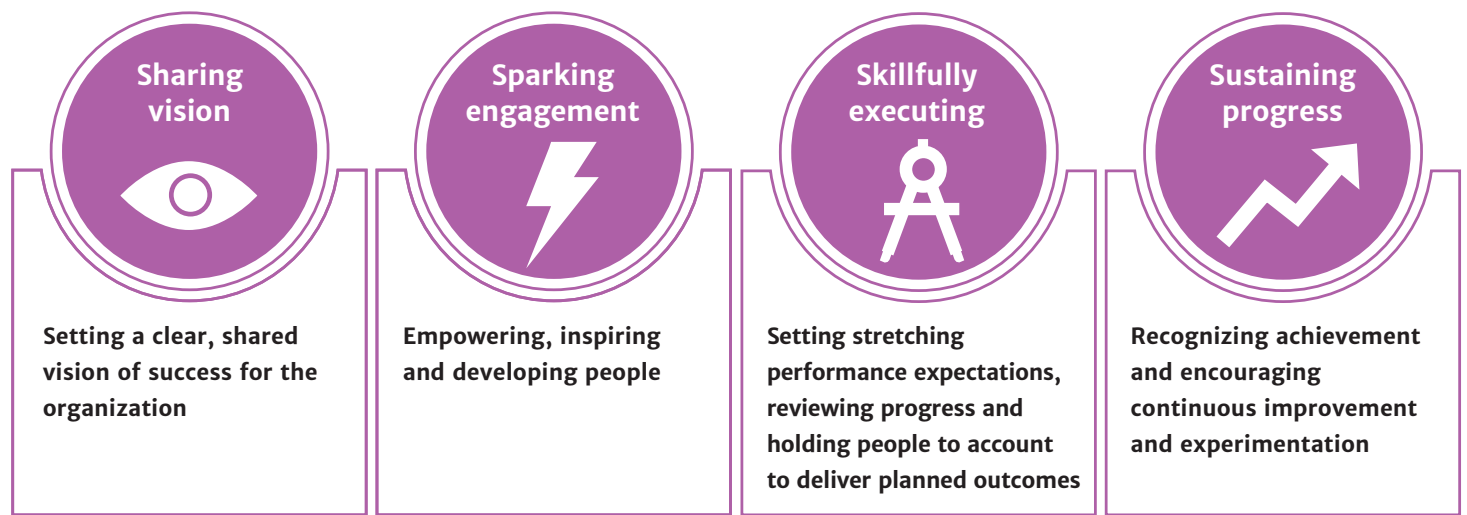Outcomes

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE 4 HABITS

As well as discovering and optimizing their strengths and authentic 'leadership edge', **effective leaders develop four leadership habits that research has shown are essential for great leadership.**

While a leader's strengths and 'edge' are unique, **any leader can develop his/her habits with focus, discipline and positive stretch or challenge.**

THE FOUR HABITS ARE:

Sharing vision

Setting a clear, shared vision of success for the organization

Sparking engagement

Empowering, inspiring and developing people

Skillfully executing

Setting stretching performance expectations, reviewing progress and holding people to account to deliver planned outcomes

Sustaining progress

Recognizing achievement and encouraging continuous improvement and experimentation

SHARING VISION

Setting vision involves setting a clear shared vision of success for the organization.

Leadership theorists and behavioural scientists have done extensive research over many decades showing the importance of setting a clear, compelling vision to guide employees to achieve organizational goals. Without this the organization or team will be rudderless and employees will be unclear of the purpose of their actions.

Esteemed leadership experts and researchers, Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (1985) maintained that leaders "...visions or intentions are compelling and pull people towards them. Intensity coupled with commitment is magnetic" (p.26).

Similarly, transformational leadership experts Conger and Bass (2006) and Bass and Avolio (1994) maintained that envisioning and the communication skills to convey their vision effectively are critical competencies for effective leadership.
Bass concluded that setting and communicating a clear vision are essential to motivate and influence followers to go 'above and beyond' in the face of transformational change and uncertainty.

Acclaimed leadership experts and authors, Kouzes and Posner (2007) stress the importance of "Inspiring a Shared Vision" in their best-selling book, **The Leadership Challenge.** According to them, this practice involves envisioning the future by imagining existing possibilities and enlisting others by appealing to shared aspirations of others.

SPARKING ENGAGEMENT

Sparking engagement is about empowering, inspiring and developing others.

Numerous leadership experts and researchers like Kouzes and Posner (2007), Bass and Riggo (2006), Adiar (1998), Northouse (2007), and Bennis (1997) have written widely on the need for leaders to strengthen others by empowering, supporting and motivating them to achieve high levels of performance.

For example, in her book, Multipliers, Liz Wiseman (2010) found that the best leaders help people learn and grow through supportive behaviours including listening, promoting an open, appreciative work environment and providing regular feedback to people.

SKILFULLY EXECUTING

Skillful execution involves setting stretching performance expectations, reviewing progress and holding people to account to ensure delivery of planned outcomes.

No leader can be effective unless they produce good results through their team. Research on leadership and motivation theory has highlighted the need for leaders to set clear performance expectations and work standards (e.g., House, 1996; Chen and Bliese, 2002) in order to motivate people and establish a climate for effective performance. They also need to take decisive action to deal with shortfalls and monitor progress to ensure people remain on target (e.g., Adair, 1988).

In a 2016 study, Gallup found that around 50% of US employees don't know what is expected of them. The authors conclude that **"even if employees feel energized and motivated, those who lack clear expectations and spend too much time working on the wrong things can't advance key initiatives to create value for an organization."** They highlighted that leaders should create clear expectations by getting employees' input into expectations, setting high expectations and personalizing expectations to take account of employees' strengths.

SUSTAINING PROGRESS

Sustaining progress involves recognizing achievement and encouraging continuous improvement and experimentation.

Research has consistently shown that in order to be effective, leaders need to recognize outstanding effort and show appreciation for excellence (Bass, 2006; Kouzes and Posner, 2007; Wizeman, 2010).

However, they also need to help people to change and stay open to develop their capabilities to deal with disruptive and frequent change (Bass and Avolio, 1994).

EXCELLENT LEADERS LEARN TO BE EFFECTIVE ACROSS ALL THE HABITS

Our own research in 2017 based on n = 866 leaders across a broad range of sectors shows that leaders who demonstrated high levels of effectiveness across all the habits are seen as significantly more effective than those who are less effective in one or more of the habit areas.

The three most highly rated leadership behaviours in higher performers were:

PROMOTES

an open and respectful work environment where people can freely express their views and ideas (Sparking engagement)

ENSURES

a strong customer/service-based strategy that builds trust and loyalty (Sharing vision)

ENCOURAGES

people to be open to change and develop their capabilities to meet future requirements (Sustaining progress)

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