

GENERAL INTRODUCTION - HANDOUT 3

Review of the GLP and Action Inquiry

Objectives:

1. Deeper understanding of the theory and experience of the Action Logics
2. Reflecting on ways that adults mature from one stage to the next
3. Creating a space for inquiry and personal/group reflection focusing on the last period in light of the action logics

Background:

When we think about developmental action logics as worldviews and mental models from which leaders are speaking and acting, we can see the impact of these distinct worldviews on our world in general and on the way we relate to others. We are meaning makers: what we see and the sense we make of it makes a great deal of difference in our understanding and exercise of leadership and in our relationship to others.

Exercise 1: Reconnecting to the Action Logics

**This section builds on the insights covered in the Practices and Exercises section of Module 1 (namely, GLP, Action Inquiry and the three loops of feedback,...)*

Part 1: Preparing for the review

Please take a quiet 15 minutes stroll outside. Become present to yourself. Become present to the city, the garden, the trees, the birds. Breathe and focus on your desire to welcome insights that will surface following this exercise.

Part 2: Reviewing the last period in light of the Action Logic framework

When you are ready, read the below questions and reflect on the last period.

- In the last period, what connections have you made to the concept of the action logics?
- In what ways has this developmental framework become a way of seeing what people are doing and understanding the underlying reasons for their actions?
- What connections have you made between these frameworks and the experience of the world around you? Think of the crisis in Europe, the United States, the Middle East and beyond. How did this framework shed light on how world leaders are responding?
- To what extent did your awareness of your own "action logic" serve as a helpful resource for you in the past six months? Did it influence your self-management, your interpersonal relationships, or how you approached your goals?
- Did you notice when and how you shifted into your "fall back" action logic in times of overwhelming stress? If so, what helped you to return to your full capacity?
- To what extent did you use the three loops of feedback, learning, and adaptation as a way of reflecting on challenges or improving your performance as a leader?

Part 3: Joining Small group and Sharing

Head to your small group and share insights.

A learning experience with a vertical dimension:

As highlighted in Module 1 (Our approach to learning), this experience will involve both Horizontal and Vertical learning. Horizontal Learning is about developing our Skill Sets (competencies), Vertical Learning, on the other hand, is about Self-Transformation (evolving mindsets).

Developmental research has identified four phases in our Vertical “Ways of Knowing”. Every stage has a distinct way of seeing, valuing, and making sense of the world and others, that we will refer to as “action logics” (Refer to the GLP worksheet in the Practices Section)

- The **Instrumental Knower** tends toward a concrete, external, and transactive orientation to the world. He/she is rule based, has a very concrete thinking and is self-interest oriented (not our focus here)
- The **Socialized Knower** identifies him/herself through relation with other persons or ideas (to the extent one is “embedded” in these relationships). That person is therefore other-focused and constructs his/her sense of self primarily from the *outside-in*. (50% managers in these stages - diplomat and expert levels).
- The **Self-Authoring Knower** takes responsibility for and ownership of their own internal authority. He/She has a reflective sense of self which that person primarily constructs from the *inside-out*. (44% of managers in these stages - achievers and redefining levels)
- The **Self-Transforming Knower** has a more complex and interconnected sense of self that is constantly available for re-framing and adaptation (5% of managers in these stages). A significant shift from the self-authoring to the self-transforming happens by embracing the vulnerability to be changed by one’s relationships and interactions without “losing oneself”.

Transitioning across Stages

Transitioning and developing from one stage to the other takes time and involves embracing new ways of knowing, being and doing. It is mainly about expanding our repertoire. Research shows that we don’t skip stages/levels, and grow from one to another as we are developing our capacities and meaning-making. When we do so, we retain the capacities we have developed at at previous levels. It is also true that there is fluidity between the stages.

- Moving from the Achiever to the Redefining, for example, calls for more inquiry, more courage to disturb the status quo, a bigger focus on values, the ability to reframe situations, a search for a deeper meaning, and the ability to minimize hierarchy and increase effective, participatory decision making.
- On the other hand, moving from the Redefining to the Transforming includes growing our capacity to adapt and embrace continuous change, developing our systems awareness, taking principled action, being able to surface tension, seeking the unknown, operating across boundaries and transforming hierarchy...

The fluidity of these action logics depends on our circumstances, work and life experiences, how centered we are, etc. Under the best conditions (rested, centered in one’s self, good holding environment, high capacity team members, diversity of skills and perspectives...), we sometimes are able to make meaning based on our emerging capacity - the next action logic. When the challenges we face outweigh the supports, internally and externally, fall back happens.

Exercise 2: Consolation, Desolation, and the Ratio of Supports and Challenges

- If you could draw the balance of supports, challenges and the stable base, what does it look like over the past months? What pattern of consolations and desolations did you notice? How has your ratio of supports and challenges been over the past six months?
- What were helpful conditions that enabled you take perspective from your emerging action logic, that is, from a more complex view point?
- Have we experienced fallback recently? What were the conditions at that time?
- Share your insights with the group. How many within your small group feel balance of high supports and high challenges?
- What will you do this week (during this learning experience) to bring your best self forward, i.e., to support yourself in showing up fully?

Growing towards a more mutual power

Growing the capacity of our consciousness and in our relations with others involves a transformation and development in our understanding of and relationship to power. This module is an invitation to move from unilateral power (where we tend to leverage others to get our way), to a more mutual power (consensus-oriented decisions) and ultimately to an alchemical power (think of the ways in which Pedro Arrupe and Pope Francis lead change). This kind of transformation is supported by various reflective practices such as engaging in triple-loop feedback (refer to the Exercises and Practices section), developing our awareness and vulnerability, engaging in surprising action, practicing loving and courageous inquiry, and making timely, experimental interventions.

Exercise 3:

- Looking back at the past months, whether successful or not, how did you use your authority and power with others?
- In order to grow, how can you introduce more mutual power experiences into your life/work: shared discussions, open inquiry, constructive feedback, mutual influence, exercises of compassion?

Note: In the Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius often made implicit reference to vertical learning and growth in the expression “to make progress in the Lord.” With this expression, he conveyed that the purpose of the Spiritual Exercises and of all Christian practice, both prayer and service of others, is intended to help us become more Christ-like. What does this mean? To grow in the image and likeness of Christ is to develop, through grace, inner freedom from fears and attachments so that we could be more available for relationships, creativity, and discerning charity toward our brothers and sisters. This personal maturation on behalf of relationships, love, and the appropriate use of power is at the heart of what we describe in terms of the Action Logics.

Resources:

- Action Inquiry, Bill Torbert and Associates (Refer to Module 1)
- The How-To of Vertical Leadership Development–Part 2, Nick Petrie