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- Explorer at the intersection of technology and educational design
- Current focus on game-based design, presenting at the Serious Play conference this month
- Recent chapter publication in “The Immersive Internet”
- Global Practice Lead for Duke Corporate Education’s Design Group
What We’ll Do Today

In this webinar, you will gain:

• Key insights into how global CEOs see the world changing

• An introduction to the Seven Sense-Abilities that leaders need to develop

• Important questions to ask your leaders in order to help them build their Sense-Abilities
Leading in Context

CEOs interviewed from leading organizations around the world

Focused on understanding:
- Changes in problems and opportunities
- Shifts in influence to resolve issues
- What leaders need to thrive in this context

- USA: Engineering/Consulting, Financial Services, Mining and Extractives, Not for profits
- China: Construction and Materials, Manufacturing, Mining and Extractives
- India: Food Products, Information Technology, Professional Services
- Thailand: Construction and Materials
- Australia: Financial Services
- Europe: Insurance, Manufacturing
- South Africa: Financial Services, Infrastructure Development, Professional Services
- Brazil: Professional Services
- Pharmaceuticals/Health Care, Professional Services, Financial Services
Polling Question

What is the biggest development need you specifically see for leaders of your company?

A. Ability to adapt and pivot

B. Ability to lead through influence rather than authority

C. Ability to move away from current mental models

D. Awareness of the ecosystem within which they operate
Leadership in Context

Last year, Duke Corporate Education conducted a set of interviews with 38 CEOs of companies around the globe. The topic was the new leadership context. We all acknowledge that the world has changed; that has been documented in many studies conducted by a number of consulting firms. Our questions dealt with how the context within which CEOs lead has changed. Our purpose was to understand changes in what leaders need to be able to do so we could think about how to effectively develop them.
Ages and Disruptions

AGRARIAN

INDUSTRIAL

INFORMATION/KNOWLEDGE
The Interdependent Age
The New Leadership Context

Global

Interdependence

Challenges are less foreseeable

Knowledge is less reliable
The New Leadership Context

Knowledge Is less reliable
Key Leadership Issues

Knowledge is less reliable

Challenges are less foreseeable

The line of sight from problem to solution is blurry

Control over the outcome is not clear cut
Leaders have lived in a world of possible answers

• Over the past 50 years leaders of large institutions have lived in a world of possible answers. It was about finding the right strategy, the right partner, the right new market, the right countries to produce in, the right degree of government control, the right fiscal policy.

• It was complex and change was constant but the rules were pretty clear. Leaders relied on expert knowledge, analytical models, learning and development and mentors to help them find the answers.
Now the world is about seeking out the right questions and constructing the right context for solutions.

Assumptions about power, influence and position in the world and at the table are changing. Coupled with unfamiliar interdependencies that affect cost, price and market power it is akin to being lost at sea and your radar is broken. Knowing what the sea looks like at any point in time is pretty useless --- it changes constantly. Having a way to think about, understand and act in uncharted waters --- no matter what the conditions is what matters. **Having your own personal way to do that defines the new leader.**
The need for leaders who can...

- Develop the ability to grapple and “grok”
- Learn to lead through successive approximation
- Build and influence collectives
- Broaden systemic self awareness
- Engage the organization in “the new rational”
- Develop new sources of reliable knowledge and information
- Understand how to understand
The Seven Sense-Abilities

1. Develop the ability to grapple and “grok”
2. Learn to lead through successive approximation
3. Build and influence collectives
4. Develop new sources of reliable knowledge and information
5. Engage the organization in “the new rational”
6. Understand how to understand
7. Broaden systemic self-awareness
The Seven Sense-Abilities

"Groking"* requires that all previous knowledge, capabilities and experiences are framed and folded in real-time to enable the leader to rapidly make sense of the current and unfamiliar context they find themselves in. "Grok" means to understand so thoroughly that the observer becomes part of the observed. In order to do this leaders must do a certain amount of grappling with the environment, with relationships and with their beliefs learning what is important to let go, hold on to and reinvent. Grappling and groking form a process of sense making that enable the leader to more quickly see leverage for action.

Key Question

“How long can I hold on to multiple conflicting hypotheses about which course of action to take until I can see a way forward that gives me the most leverage?”
The Seven Sense-Abilities

Learn to lead through successive approximation

The leader of the future is the one that gets to the best answer for the context they are in soonerest employing successive approximation – figuring out the next move that provides the greatest number of options for future movement.
Key Question

“How can I quickly figure out the next move that will leave me the most options for the move after that?”
The Seven Sense-Abilities

For many leaders, the muscles they have used to drive decisions or actions (position, dominance, economic or military clout) are not as effective as they have been in the past. They need new ways of influencing and orchestrating decision making and problem solving that cross economic and cultural boundaries. The new skills are more than what we have termed global mindset or cultural awareness in the past. They involve a deep appreciation for context and the ability to form collectives of individuals and entities across the system that can take on questions together, solve problems and break through barriers to growth.
Key Question

“How do I engage people in a way that builds understanding and movement? Essentially, how do I inspire and bring people with me?”
The Seven Sense-Abilities

Develop new sources of reliable knowledge and information

The continuing increase in the velocity of change in the world and the number and kind of outlets for information require that leaders have a network of trusted knowledge resources that go beyond the company and beyond the business to help them read weak signals and anticipate business impact.
Key Question

“How good is my radar for picking up weak signals that could undermine my business or for identifying new opportunities to grow my business?”
The Seven Sense-Abilities

Engage the organization in “the new rational”

In a world of instability it is not only leaders who lose their footing. Tremors from the turbulence of the last few years have defined rational behavior in many organizations as the avoidance of risk and following the rules. The fallout from this behavior is a loss of confidence and the inability to see or fear of acting on new opportunity. Leaders must be able to see what inhibits the pursuit of opportunity in their organizations, correct it and redefine rational behavior through their messages and actions.
Key Question

“How do I move the default position of the organization from avoidance of risk to the pursuit of opportunity when the context seems less certain?”
The Seven Sense-Abilities

Leaders are dealing with new and complex issues in unfamiliar contexts. In this situation, it is impossible to consistently be armed with the right answers. Rather, successful action often depends on being able to frame the right questions and that depends on the leader’s process for understanding the unfamiliar. Knowledge of how one goes about understanding the unfamiliar (tacit knowledge) is more valuable and practical than trying to absorb what might be known today. The most valuable knowledge is often not “what is” but “why it is.”
Key Question

“How can I make sense of unfamiliar contexts as quickly as possible?”
The Seven Sense-Abilities

In the past we have spoken about heightened self awareness. What is more important now is broadened self awareness. Understanding the leader’s impact on systems and situations that go well beyond the walls of the company is central to building that leader’s ability to navigate unfamiliar contexts. Feedback in context is essential to this kind of self awareness. Through it, leaders learn to see themselves and their companies as actors in a broader ecosystem that surrounds a problem or opportunity.
Key Question

What could be the systemic consequences should I choose to take a particular course of action?”
Polling Question

What is the best way to cultivate these Seven Sense-Abilities?

A. More practice during development activities

B. More collaboration between leaders during development

C. Built-in allowances for mistakes during development

D. More mechanisms for leaders to receive feedback
Five Design Principles

1. Recognize the importance of context to competency

2. Focus on increasing the ability to perform rather than filling skill gaps

3. Expose and immerse participants in a broader set of experiences and an increased breadth of resources

4. Design for knowledge creation rather than solely knowledge transfer

5. Evolve from competency based assessment to performance based feedback
“MEN HONOR WHAT LIES WITHIN THEIR SPHERE OF KNOWLEDGE BUT DO NOT REALIZE HOW DEPENDENT THEY ARE ON WHAT LIES BEYOND IT.”

Chuang Tzu
MY PLAN
Polling Question

Do you think this learning experience be a good match for your senior leaders?

A. Yes

B. No

C. Maybe
Questions?

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8/21  3 Must-Haves for Managing the Human Side of Change

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Questions or Comments?
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