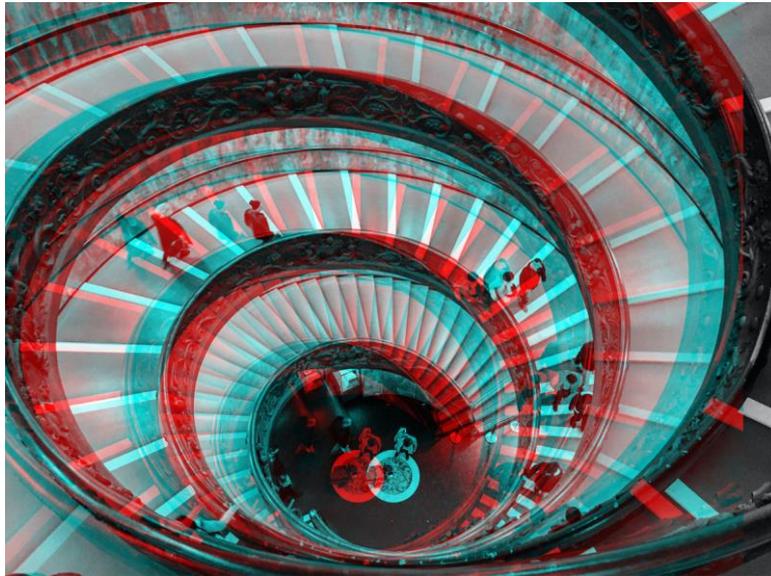




FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Moving Up the Leadership Ladder

There's a world of difference between the traits and actions of a line manager and those of someone who is operating at the strategic level. Moving from one to the other is potentially a huge transition and requires the individual to understand how their natural disposition may need to change and in what ways.

The typical line manager :

Just think about this for a moment. What sort of things are they dealing with?

- People management
- Process control(s)
- Resourcing
- Reporting
- Budgets
- Project management
- Supplier management
- Customer liaison

Most of those are concerned with detail and immediate needs. Also they frequently have defined boundaries or responsibilities set from above.

In this context the manager's focus is more likely on **Steadiness** and **Compliance** factors as measured by a DISC profile. Motivational factors frequently include Standard Operating Procedures (for their role or department) a degree of Security in the role and adequate Recognition for their work. Their organising style is perhaps more around Rule Enforcing and possibly Motivating.

So contrast all of that with the frame for a strategic leader.

The strategic leader :

By its very nature a strategic role is much less hands-on. Instead the focus has to be on the horizon in all directions and interpreting what is going on before translating that into messages and direction for the operational parts of the business.

As a consequence the things they are dealing with are going to be rather different:-

- Stakeholder liaison
- Strategic direction
- Relationship management
- Influencing behaviours
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Raising finance
- Identifying new markets
- Setting budgets

These offer a greater degree of uncertainty and frequently a more fuzzy view of the world that has to be interpreted in the light of the organisation and its context.

Moreover the strategic leader is more likely to exhibit **Dominance** and **Influence** factors, as measured by a DISC profile, as their major levers to achieve their objectives. Those objectives themselves are likely to be strategic rather than tactical in their outcomes. However they also need to be aware of the pitfalls of relying too much on their own views and find ways in which those can be subject to robust challenge. Elevation to the C-suite carries a responsibility to take many views into account and come to considered decisions. So they need good **Impulse Control** and need to improve **Emotion Perception** and **Relationships** in their Emotional Intelligence.

They are more likely to operate with a Directing style or by being Motivating and Assertive.

Where do your natural behaviours sit in the midst of all this and can you describe them objectively? What might you need or want to change if you are trying to move up the ladder?

If you are responsible for developing leaders, what help might you or they need to achieve the necessary changes?

Just considering these simple differences can highlight areas for improvement or better understanding. Remember - it's cool to say you don't know. It's even cooler to ask the difficult question WHY? and then ask for help.

For more information on Leadership Development and how you might use coaching email admin@executive-2020-coaching.com