

5 steps towards agile leadership

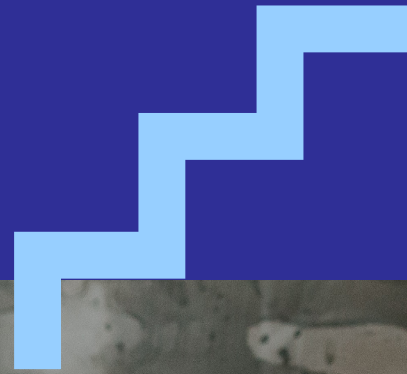


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Introduction

Over the past few months, we have seen how easily our world can be turned upside down. Our daily lives, both personal and professional, can be transformed in a heartbeat - **how can we cope with this reality?**



VUCA is the new normal

VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) is an acronym first used in 1987 by The U.S. Army War College. It is used to describe an often blurry environment where things change fast.

The notion of agility has been identified by many experts as a key competency, needed to deal with our VUCA world - let's explore what it really means and how to develop it in your leaders.

What is agility?

The term "agile" as applied to a way of working first originated in 2001 with a new approach to software development. As organizations increasingly sought to become more agile—that is, faster and more flexible—they recognized that principles of agile software development could be applied much more broadly to organizations as a whole.¹ Today, agility is thought of as a set of cultural values, principles and behaviors, rather than specific practices

The agile organization

- thrives in an unpredictable, rapidly changing environment.
- is both stable and dynamic.
- puts the needs of customers first.
- easily adapts to environmental changes.
- values inclusiveness and transversality.
- embraces transformation, change, uncertainty and ambiguity.

1. McKinsey, 2018.

How to become an agile leader?

1. Build your resilience

In German, the word resilience translates into “Widerstandskraft” - the ability to stay strong in the face of adversity. As everyone else, resilient people feel strong emotions, including pain, anger or frustration. However, they are able to deal with those feelings without numbing them out, crumbling or shutting down.

To build your resilience, you can go through this 3-step check-list:



Name your emotions: Are you feeling angry? Sad? Frustrated? Excited? Enthusiastic? Being aware of your emotions can help you better deal with your team.



Be selective of your information intake: Too much information will lead your brain into overdrive - make sure you carefully select what information you access and when. By engaging with information on your own terms, you will become more productive and peaceful.

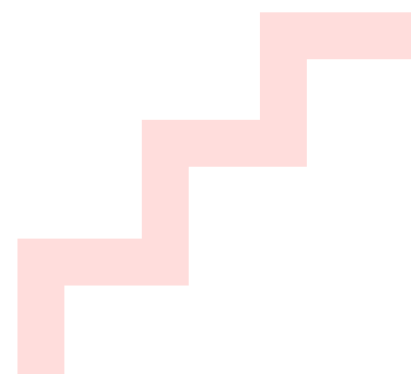
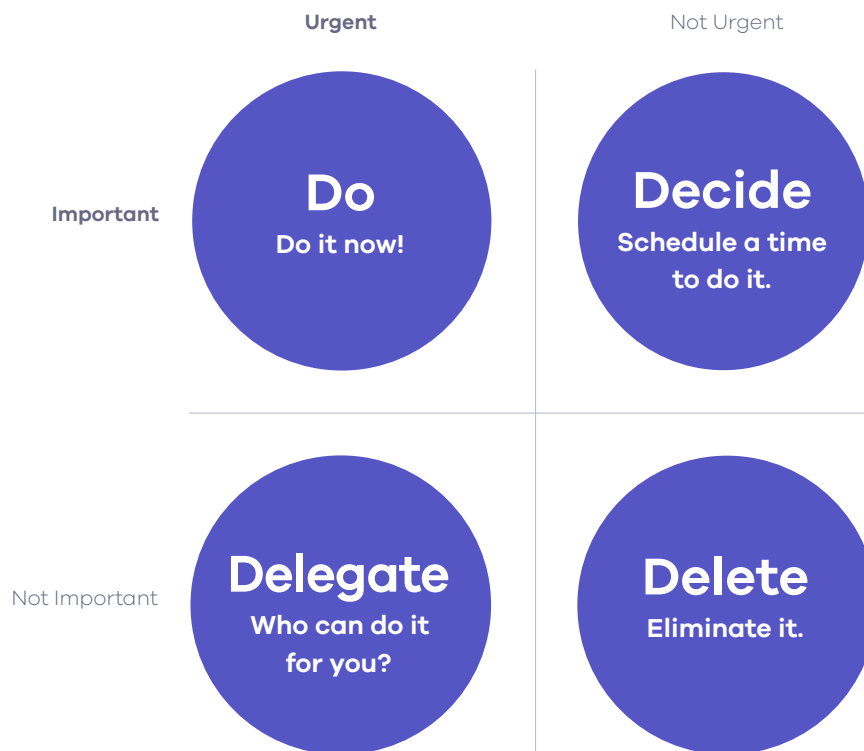


Focus on what you can control: Your “Concern Zone” is filled with issues that worry you, but that you can’t control or influence. Try to spend your time and energy on issues within your circles.

2. Invest in the essential

In the face of a crisis, there is no time or resources to spend on superfluous projects - we are forced to focus. Agile leaders adopt this mindset at all times, making sure that they stay focused on high-impact, high-value projects. This means being able to adapt their roadmap as priorities evolve. The Eisenhower Decision Matrix can help you quickly make sense of what counts and prioritize accordingly.

The Eisenhower Decision Matrix



3. Develop your emotional intelligence

Emotional and social intelligence is the ability to be aware of your emotions and those of others, in the moment, and to use this information to choose your behavior and manage your relationships accordingly.



4. Create empowered teams

Traditional organization design tends towards siloed hierarchies, based on a reactive mind-set of authority. The relationship between leaders and teams is one of superior to subordinate.

Designed for collaboration, agile organizations employ networks of autonomous teams. This requires an underlying creative mind-set of partnership, of managing by agreement based on freedom, trust, and accountability.

What is collective intelligence?

“It is a form of universally distributed intelligence, constantly enhanced, coordinated in real time, and resulting in the effective mobilization of skills.”

Pierre Lévy

Holder of the Canada Research Chair in Collective Intelligence at the University of Ottawa



5. Become a leader-coach

Leader-coaches make performance and success their top priority - however, they will reach ambitious goals by growing their team. Leader-coaches will focus on building capability in their people, empowering them to find their own solutions. They adopt a coaching mindset, using the key skills of coaching in their management.

Leader-coaches know how:

- to ask open and stimulating questions
- to listen and be fully present for their team
- to empower their team

Mindset and approach:
Open, curious, flexible. Focusing on each employee's potential and capabilities.



How can digital coaching be used to develop agile leadership?

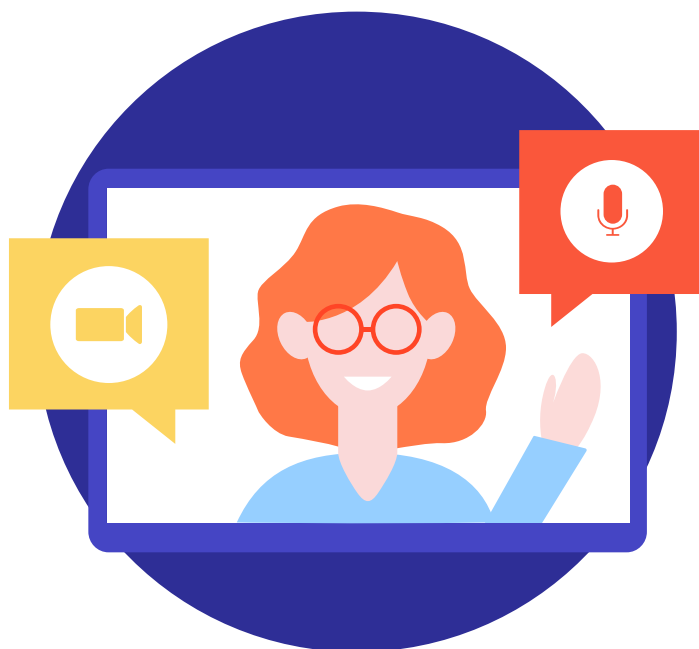
To more concretely illustrate these principles, let's take the example of a manager looking to develop agile leadership.

Maria V. is a middle manager in her thirties at a large software firm. She is a valued member of her organization, but sometimes struggles with the managerial aspect of her job.

Leading a team of six, she finds it difficult to navigate from project to project and to help her team move at a rapid pace. She feels burdened by processes but not comfortable enough to challenge them. She observes that she has trouble helping her team identify priorities, and often feels lost amidst the various projects she is involved in. As a result, she regularly feels overwhelmed and stress, and these emotions are passed onto her team.

Maria's company is committed in developing agile leadership amongst their managers. As a result, she benefits from a digital coaching course to work on her behavior as a leader.

After logging into her personal space on the CoachHub platform, Maria will select the best coach for her thanks to presentation videos. She will book her first session at a time that fits her schedule and enter her goals directly into the platform, after discussing them with her manager.



During her coaching program, Maria will go through 3 steps:



Awareness: By asking powerful questions, Maria's coach will help her gain awareness on her situation, her role, her strengths and areas of development and the relationship she built with her team. By using the concern / influence / control framework, Maria's coach will help her better focus on what requires her attention.



Learning: After becoming aware of her own biases and limiting beliefs, Maria will learn how to overcome them, and how to put into practice new behaviors and attitudes. Using the Eisenhower Decision Matrix, Maria will work on prioritizing her day-to-day tasks with her coach.



Accountability: keep her accountable for her progress. Together, they will make sure that what she has discovered during their time together is translated into concrete action and lives on long after the coaching course ends.





About CoachHub

CoachHub is the leading global talent development platform that enables organizations to create a personalized, measurable and scalable coaching program for the entire workforce, regardless of department and seniority level. By doing so, organizations are able to reap a multitude of benefits, including increased employee engagement, higher levels of productivity, improved job performance and increased retention.

CoachHub's global pool of coaches is comprised of over 3,500 certified business coaches in 70 countries across six continents with coaching sessions available in over 60 languages, to serve more than 500 clients. Our programs are based on advanced R&D from our Coaching Lab, led by Prof. Jonathan Passmore and our Science Council.

CoachHub is backed by leading tech investors, including Draper Esprit, Holtzbrinck Ventures, Partech, RTP Global, Signals Venture Capital and Speedinvest. In September 2021, CoachHub acquired French digital coaching pioneer MoovOne to build a global champion focused on jointly democratizing coaching.

For more information visit

www.coachhub.com