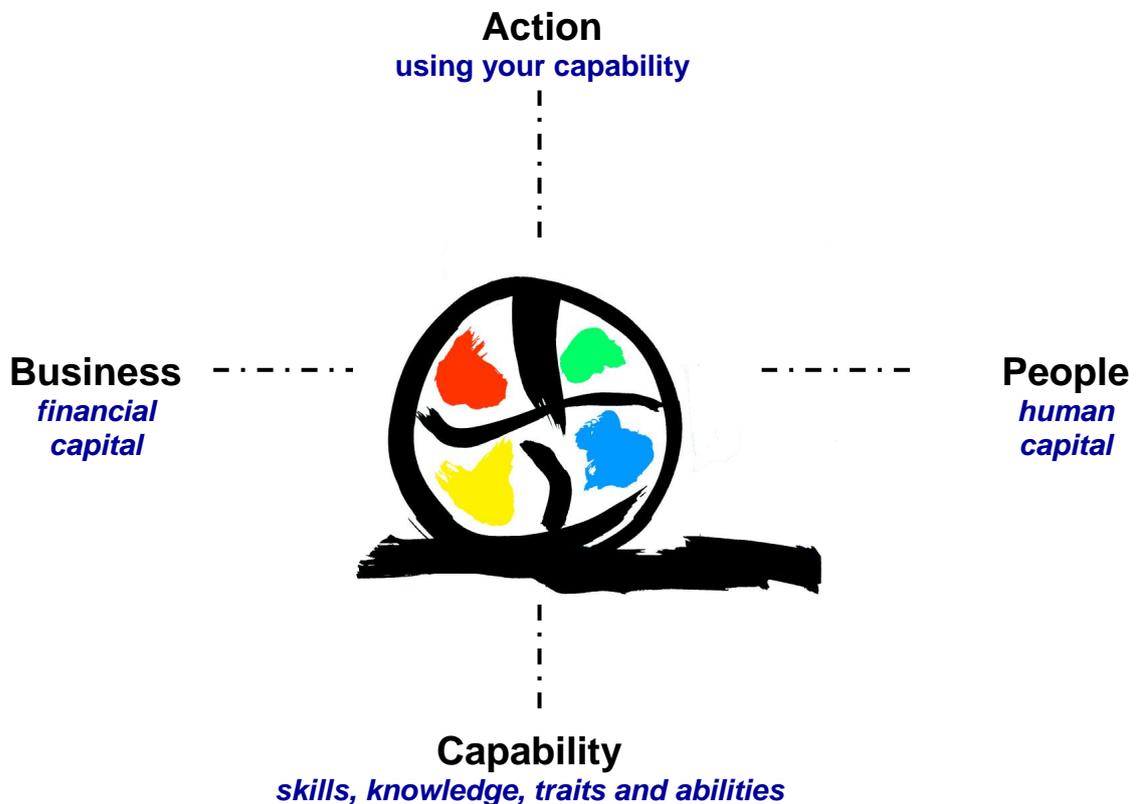




## Agile Business Leader

*Brief Explanation*



Agile Business Leaders consistently and successfully face two realities; (1) The need to be business AND people focused and (2) the expectation that they build personal and organisational competency AND achieve action. When the two realities are combined it is apparent that four roles become necessary to lead in today's frantic world. 1. Strategist, 2. Enabler, 3. Champion and 4. Specialist, each with specific traits.

The horizontal reality of the Business (financial capital- wealth employed for the production of more wealth) and the People (human capital- the sum total of an organization's human performance capability) addresses the factors impacting the success of an organization.





Action  
using your capability



**Agility**



Capability  
*skills, knowledge, traits and abilities*

**Action includes:** the ability to transform knowledge and talents into actions. Action involves sensing changes in signals from the environment (both internal and external) and are able to adapt accordingly. In addition it includes; developing and communicating strategic initiatives, adapting current operations to improve effectiveness, implementing new business directions motivating people to achieve results and aligning oneself around the direction of the organization. The Action element of this model also includes the methods and practices an organization needs to create, capture, transfer, and mobilize knowledge to enable the organization to adapt to a changing environment.

**Capability includes:** the sum of the individual's knowledge, skills and attributes. Capability focuses on the uniqueness of the individual and his or her expertise, natural aptitude, acquired proficiency and capacity to perform. Capability refers to both a person's ability to learn in the future and actions that they can do now. It incorporates consistent behavior and a degree of mental capacity and moral quality.



These two realities- Business & People and Action & Capability can be used to form a model for understanding the elements and criteria in becoming an Agile Business Leader.

When the two realities are crossed, four quadrants are created to define the four roles of an Agile Business Leader, 1. Strategist, 2. Enabler, 3. Champion and 4. Specialist, each with a list of traits associated with them.

As change in business is inevitable, the traits of the ABL provide the competencies necessary to ensure survival and oversee the dynamic growth of an organization. All ABL traits are essential tools to enable leaders to quickly deal with and adapt to change. These ABL traits can be taught, learned, monitored and measured and thereby assist individuals and organizations to deliver business results.

The best organizations, whether they know it or not, develop AGILE leaders who leverage the knowledge and wisdom of the organization through their role as “Enabler”, “Champion”, “Specialist”, and “Strategist” as the individual situation requires.

Below are more in-depth descriptions of the four roles which make up the Agile Business Leader and provide an opportunity for you to determine where your developmental needs might lie.





## **SPECIALIST (*Incorporates Expertise*)**

The Specialist joins the realities of Business and Capability. Within this quadrant, a person is focused on helping the business grow and incorporating his own knowledge and capabilities to make that happen.

Specific traits for the Specialist are:

- Industry Knowledge
- Operational Intelligence
- Specific Expertise
- Corporate Accountability

Specialist competencies include:

- 1. Build quality systems-** Know how to work well with systems and procedures and are organized, precise and methodical in setting guidelines for efficiency and being able to make meaningful contributions to the organization.
  
- 2. Understand industry trends-** Have the technical proficiency to study and assess issues in light of past practices and the best practices in other industries. They respect tradition and build their knowledge through experience. They have the ability to read the business environment and focus on maximizing the business benefit at all times. They contribute to the success of a business by knowing how it makes money, who the customers are and why they buy the company's products and services.
  
- 3. Build a reservoir of internal & external operational expertise-** Leverage business technology to build technical knowledge within themselves and from their association with others. They might partner with others to broaden their opportunities. They balance excellence with a search for perfection. They are business literate.



4. **Consistently update their specialist knowledge-** Continue to ensure everyone has gathered all the knowledge they need. They stay up-to-date in their fields and continually develop their talents.
  
5. **Exemplify corporate governance-** Maintain high moral and ethical standards and insist on accountability for themselves and their organization. They will provide guidelines on processes, customs, policies and laws so people can do what is right for the organization and the community and deliver results with integrity



## STRATEGIST (Navigates the Course)

The Strategist joins the realities of Business and Action. Within this quadrant, the person is focused on helping the business grow by mobilizing and transforming his or her talents to make that happen.

Specific traits for the Strategist are:

- Change Leadership
- Strategic Adaptability
- Resources for Innovation
- Path to More Profitability

Strategist competencies include:

- 1. Create & communicate vision and values-** Too often leaders choose to address only those problems that are familiar and those issues where a solution is imaginable. ABLs create a vision that challenges people by encouraging them to go past familiar ways of thinking and provoke them to stretch beyond what seems to be the 'reasonable' limits. They help people to redefine the boundaries of what they experience as constraining. They facilitate change by crafting the corporate culture and shaping the organization.
- 2. Think Strategically-** Anticipates challenges, risks and opportunities and knows what to do with them. They take a long-range, broad approach to problem-solving and decision making through objective analysis, thinking ahead and planning. They encourage expansive thinking by encouraging members to experiment to play in the margins. ABLs focus on the present and trust their instincts.
- 3. Develop strategic solutions-** Think strategically. They also deliver solutions strategically. They emphasize the production of immediate results by focusing on short-range, hands-on, practical strategies and common-sense approaches to planning and development. They create



processes and deliver solutions that continually focus on building customer and business value.

4. **Resolve issues through innovation-** Have the ability to deal with complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty and can act decisively with incomplete information. This conditions does not create fear and anxiety, rather an ABL accepts these situations as opportunities and is challenged to stretch in new directions and evokes higher levels of thinking. They seem to have the ability to achieve results when others are stymied.
5. **Promote change-** Identify themselves as change agents and constantly challenge the way things are done. They recognize that people prefer to be involved in change rather than be changed. They involve others in the change process because it makes the most sense.
6. **Ensure good ideas come to fruition-** Value ideas and opinions of others and collect their input as part of the decision-making process. They enlist the talents of others to help meet objectives by giving them important activities and sufficient autonomy to exercise their own judgment.
7. **Recognize & rectify specific inefficiencies-** Continuously makes adjustments to systems and processes along the way. They admit when something is not working and take corrective action and learn from their mistakes. During times of reconfiguration, they regroup and assure that the right people assembled together are provided sufficient time to think and innovate improvements.



## **CHAMPION (*Demonstrates Capabilities*)**

The Champions join the realities of People and Capability. Within this quadrant, the person is focused on helping the group dynamics of the organization by positively focusing on current and past strengths, successes and potentials and mobilizing and incorporating his or her own talents to make desired results happen.

Specific traits for the Champion are:

- Resourceful
- Responsive
- Resilient
- Committed

Champion competencies include:

- 1. Act with Courage-** Use their ability to confront fear, pain, danger, and uncertainty with strength and perseverance. They are willing to take risks and consider new and untested approaches while exploring the unknown. They are free to respectfully vocalize perspectives without restraint or fear of reprimand or censure. They welcome new ideas and perspectives because of their experimental attitude.
  
- 2. Understand self and use strengths-** Recognize their talents, and know how to fully deploy their strengths & compensate for their weaknesses. They manage their emotions and know how to motivate themselves towards action. They are conscious of their core beliefs and redirect destructive behaviors and barriers to performance so that continuous improvements can be made. ABLs celebrate and respect their achievements and, in full awareness of strengths and limitations, directs their attention to strengths.
  
- 3. Set high expectations-** Expect a great deal from themselves and others. They set high goals and work hard to achieve them. They stay



committed to analyzing the effects of their own and others' action and continuously explore and experiment ways to improve.

4. **Use innovation practices to influence and adjust-** Focus on innovation and adaptability as they constantly challenge the status quo. They incorporate their innovative ability to recover or adjust easily to misfortune or change. This approach makes them more resilient and more quickly able to bounce back from disruptions.
5. **Achieve with self determination-** Have a passionate purpose. They know what they want, why they want it and how to communicate their needs to achieve their goals. They operate with a good deal of energy and intensity. An ABL has the discipline to consistently deliver customer value by holding high expectations of themselves and others.
6. **Build internal and external network-** Know that ideas and solutions can be blocked because they have failed to reach the right people. The ABL constructs their network through relatively high-stakes activities that bring them into contact with diverse groups of people. They purposefully build their network by choosing the "right" individuals.
7. **Practice work life balance-** Are true to their values and are not driven solely by financial gain, recognition, or even power. They are ruthless at prioritizing and recognizing what is important and what can wait. They know when to stop, when to say "no" and when their mental and physical health needs to be restored.



## **ENABLER (*Facilitates Action*)**

The Enabler joins the realities of People and Action. Within this quadrant the person is focused on helping the group dynamics of the organization and mobilizing and transforming his or her talents to make that happen. Enablers are the activist of the organization.

Specific traits for the Enabler are:

- Change Leadership**
- Outcomes**
- Motivation**
- Learning in action**
- Collaborative cultures**

Enabler competencies include:

1. **Coach & mentors teams & individuals-** Help others produce extraordinary results within the business amid change, complexity, and competition. They ignite personal and team learning to solve business problems while building the organizational capability to succeed.
  
2. **Create productive working environments-** Heavily relies on collaboration. They involve people in group brainstorming and decision making and provoke thinking at all levels of the organization and with all stakeholders. They articulate their goals and influence people by engaging their minds and hearts. They present clear guidelines about limits and constraints and allow the team to make decisions at the same time keeping everyone informed. They are successful because they respect and value others' ideas.
  
3. **Motivate people towards action -** Possess a capability for keeping others enthusiastic and involved. They build on people's desire to make a difference and are able to create and recognize small wins for the group. They find the skills, attitudes and behaviors that are already



working successfully and breed those throughout the rest of the organization.

4. **Build relationships of trust-** Demonstrate an active concern for people and their needs by forming close and supportive relationships with others. They have the capacity to quickly establish free and easy interpersonal relationships. They reduce power relationships and increase partner relationships. They swiftly deal with the factors that created distrust and break from past organizational practices. ABLs maintain a high level of integrity because they know that a lack of integrity can undermine almost any other effort to build high levels of trust.
5. **Value & build upon group diversity-** Remain accessible and open to the emergence of new voices and perspectives and are willing to have their thinking interrupted. They use language effectively to influence others, sell ideas and win people over. They focus on inclusiveness whenever possible. ABLs value the ideas and opinions of others and collect others' input as part of their decision-making process.
6. **Develop collaborative processes for delivering outcomes-** Deliberately tap into others' potential. They encourage people to speak their mind even if it's an unpopular viewpoint. ABLs recognize that collaboration is an intellectual endeavor involving the creation of mutual goals. They facilitate discussion so that everyone feels heard and everyone understands who is responsible for the action developed.
7. **Develop learning environments-** Encourage the develop of knowledge and competencies by developing environments that are conducive for learning. They let people know how they are doing and give feedback in a frank and direct way. They provide candid observations and recognize the sum is greater than the whole of its



parts. ABLs create environments where individuals depends on each other and are accountable to each other.

8. **Foster communication-** Use the power of dialogue to transform the organization. They recognize that effective communication is vital to the entire organization because it coordinates employees, fulfills employee needs, supports knowledge management, and improves decision-making. They value the importance of sharing information and clearly state what is expected from others.