

Enabler- Facilitating People Towards Action

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The ABL model is a performance model providing a bedrock of required skills and abilities for any leader who wants to positively impact success. An ABL involves functioning and performing within four roles.

These roles are:

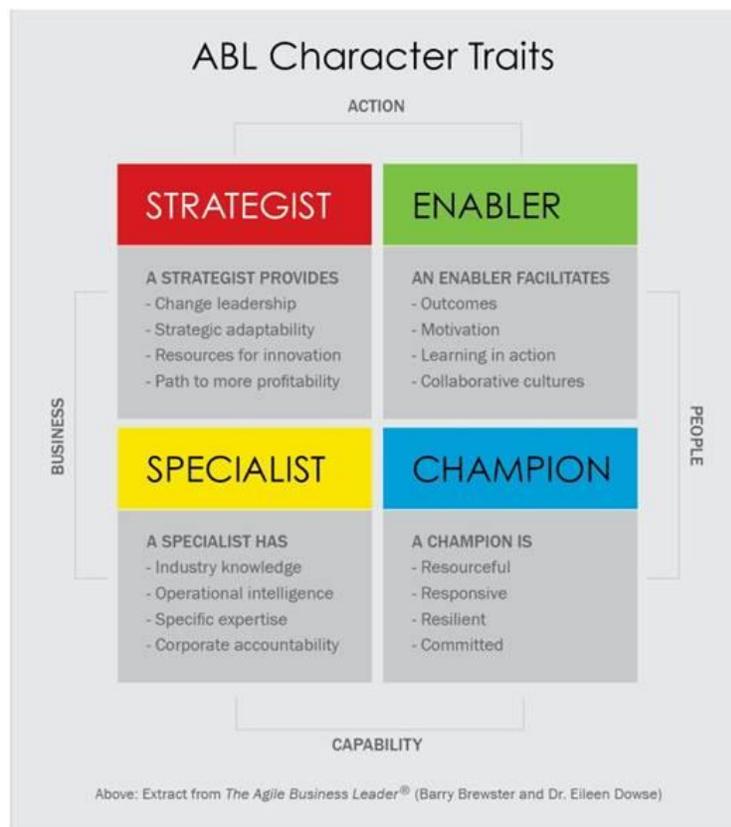
Enabler- Being able to leverage the knowledge and wisdom of everyone in the business.

Champion- Having the character and integrity to achieve and succeed.

Specialist- Possessing industrial intelligence and the means to continuously gather more.

Strategist- Creating a sustainable organization and pushing to embrace greater possibilities.

In short, an ABL is responsive, resilient, quick, flexible and extremely agile to meet the needs of customers and achieve outstanding results. To be an effective leader, a person must be able to perform a task with an appropriate level of interpersonal skills, professional knowledge, and operational ability to achieve the goal.



This article focuses on the ABL Enabler role. The Enabler responds to the realities of 'needing to be 'Business' focused and at the same time needing to achieve 'Action'. In this role the ABL focuses on the group dynamics within the organization. Enablers are the activist of the organization, they bring people to action.

How leaders talk to the people in their organization determines how well the organization will function. If the conversations are stilted, politicized or fragmented, failure is likely. If conversations are candid, open for debate, reality-based and poised to search for realistic solutions success is imminent.

Enablers tap into secret chambers of the minds, hearts and souls of people and know which buttons to push to activate their staff's, trust, drive and perseverance. Being an Enabler is *not* about authority it is about respect, influence and loyalty. Enablers communicate an optimistic, bright, enticing picture of the future for their followers. They convince people to get on board and stay on board. They make people feel good about themselves and what they're accomplishing.

Enablers deliberately tap into the potential of others. They create safe environments which encourage people to speak their mind, even if it's an unpopular viewpoint. A leader who uses the skill of the enabler, recognizes that collaboration is an intellectual endeavour involving the creation of mutual goals. They facilitate discussions so that everyone feels heard and everyone understands who is responsible for action developed. This type of leadership behaviour creates engagement.

When a leader is using the traits of an Enabler, they are accessible and open to the emergence of new ideas and perspectives. They are willing to have their own thinking interrupted so that improvements can be made. They use language effectively to influence others, sell ideas and win people over. They focus on inclusiveness whenever possible. Enablers value the ideas and opinions of others and collect others' input as part of their decision-making process.

Four traits make up the role of the ABL Enabler including:

- Achieving outcomes
- Motivating others
- Facilitating learning in action
- Building collaborative cultures

Here is a brief summary of each of these four important traits

1. Achieving outcomes

The Enabler provides the opportunity for people to achieve outstanding performance. They are resilient to breaks in communication channels because they have strong collaboration skills and continually search out ways for engaging the masses and build organizations that continually learn, adapt, evolve and improve. They don't get stuck on the petty details or emotional dramas that can weigh down the success of an outcome. Rather, they have the innate ability to impart a sense of invincibility, power and control over the situation. Enablers deliberately tap into

others' potential. They encourage people to speak their mind even if it's an unpopular viewpoint. Enablers 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.

2. Motivating others

As an enabler the leader possesses 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. You will know when you are working with an Enabler because Enablers understand how to get individuals to act in ways that maximize their 'exchange rate' with the organization. They know that people perform and behave to receive "something" and that each individual will choose different behaviors and actions to satisfy their motivational need. There is one simple strategy of the Enabler. They work from the perspective that "if I reward the behaviour I want from this person, I will get more of that behaviour". Whatever the individual motivation type, the leader provides feedback or comments consistent with the individual's need so that they can motivate the person towards an outcome.

3. Facilitating learning in action

Enablers help others produce extraordinary results even within the challenges of change, complexity, and competition. They ignite personal and team learning to solve business problems while building the organizational capability to succeed. Galileo once said, "You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him find it within himself." When leaders are open to listening to the personal experiences of their people, they can help them find the potential buried within. Enablers encourage the development of knowledge and competencies by creating environments that are conducive to 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. Enablers create environments where individuals depend on each other, are accountable to each other and continuously learn and develop from each other.

4. Building collaborative cultures

Enablers rely heavily 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. Enablers encourage 'Communities of Practice'. Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. They are dynamic, and encourage learning on the part of everyone. They are an expansion of one-on-one knowledge-sharing and are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems—in short a shared practice.

Enablers 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 challenge existing organizational practices. They maintain a high level of integrity because they know that a lack of integrity can undermine almost every other effort to build high levels of trust.

By promoting the development of Agile Business Leaders, we are calling for a shift that requires an increased level of adaptability and flexibility in business operations. We are challenging organisations to find ways to support Agile Business Leaders and address doing business in this globally connected, hyper-active environment.

This article encourages you to recognize, that when you change the way you look at things, you change the way things look. We challenge you to develop the skills of the Agile Business Leader.