# 'The Leadership Ladder'©

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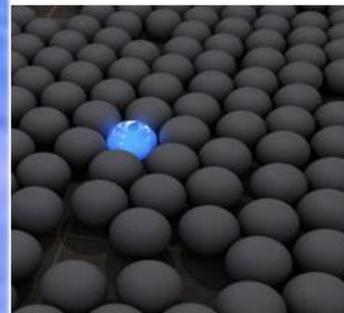
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What is the 'The Leadership Ladder©' ?(1)

- The 'Leadership Ladder' was developed by Pedagogia to provide a framework for thinking about how manager's leadership journeys evolve, and then to support and develop managers' leadership capability throughout that journey. It's the result of several years of researching, observing, analysing and thinking about what leaders do, and why they exist

- As a result, 'The Leadership Ladder' is based on the profound belief that leaders have two primary things to do, and the reason why leaders exist is to:
    - Achieve superior business performance
    - Initiate and drive change

- Whilst 'The Leadership Ladder' framework inevitably touches on the competencies of leadership, the framework is a high level view of the leadership journey, and is not meant to compete with or replace the many different and proprietary leadership or competency models which are on the market, but to complement them, by exposing and focusing on leadership issues and challenges that occur at each stage

- HR can then use their preferred competency models to map and asses the competencies that are needed to respond to the task for each level

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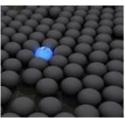
What is the 'The Leadership Ladder©' ?(2)

- 'The Leadership Ladder' model has one important difference from most other frameworks because it does not regard leadership as an abstract or primarily soft skill or orientation, but instead has a task-based orientation

- We need leaders because we depend upon leadership skills and behaviours to achieve the extra ordinary, specifically:

  1. **Business performance:** this is the belief that the notion that there is only one real purpose of leadership in business, and that is to seek out and deliver superior business results. Thus it assumes that all personal and professional growth in leadership capability has the objective of achieving business performance

  2. **Driving change:** because major change is now a pervasive and dominating force in all professional activities, the 'The Leadership Ladder' framework also assumes that superior business results are not achieved by managing the today, or achieving good management in a stable environment, but are in fact the result of being to anticipate and then drive strategic change in a constantly changing and uncertain world. Whilst junior leaders have limited scope to initiate and drive transformational change, they can nevertheless contribute to incremental change. Middle and line managers can implement delegation-led change initiate by seniors. Seniors though, particularly of course the CEO, have a heavy responsibility here, to anticipate, initiate then drive strategic, transformational change
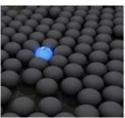
The 6 levels in 'The Leadership Ladder©'

- Each proprietary model has their own version of how many levels of leadership there are: the Lominger model, for example state there are 3 main levels (Individual Contributor, Manager, and Executive)

- In practice, we believe that, just as there are usually more than 3 levels of separation in a company's job grade structure, there is a higher level of granularity in the leadership evolution, and all our research tells us to divide the Leadership Ladder into 6 levels, which are detailed in the next pages. The 6 Levels in the Leadership Ladder are:

  - L1 Individual Contributor
  - L2 Team Leader
  - L3 Line Manager
  - L4 BU /Divisional Manager
  - L5 C Suite
  - L6 CEO

- For example, whilst all C Suite Executives are grouped together in some models, in practice there are often huge differences within capabilities and mission in the C suite, between functional level executives (e.g. CFO, CIO, etc) and the CEO, and ultimately only one of the C level executives will have the ability to become CEO. Once there, the CEO has a palpably different level of challenge to overcome and leadership to play, hence this higher level of granularity that you see in the Leadership Ladder compared to other frameworks

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And the 5 Leadership Dimensions (LD)

- The Leadership Ladder does not simply state the obvious, that leaders 'must have more leadership capability' but seeks to indentify the sources or determinants of leadership. From our research and experience, we believe that leaders, and which level of leader they are, can be determined by success on 5 key dimensions, labelled as being Leadership Dimensions or LDs:

LD1 **Personal dimension:** whether primarily internal - focused on self, or primarily external, - focused on others. Included other aspects like emotional intelligence, self control, motivation, resilience and determination in the face of difficulties, etc

LD2 **Strategic dimension** (which includes envisioning, understanding the macro environment, decision making, etc)

LD3 **Level of complexity:** the levels of complexity of the environment in which a leader operates, but also levels of uncertainty, turbulence and ambiguity. Senior leader also have to contend with more 'breadth' – e.g.., people, plus politics, plus finance, plus technology issues all wrapped up together

LD4 **Change Management:** change will only happen if leaders make it happen, so this is a key dimension to determine the level at which a leader operates. Leaders starting out on the ladder contribute little or nothing to real change, typically only delivering incremental change usually prescribed by their seniors. Line managers will pay a key role in delivering change demanded and delegated by higher management. CEOs will initiate and drive transformational, strategic change

LD5 **Business Acumen:** leadership or any other attribute counts for nothing if the leader doesn't deliver business results or performance, often superior business performance, so business acumen
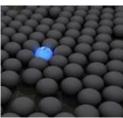
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'The Leadership Ladder©' –
the 5 major challenges which determine the leadership journey
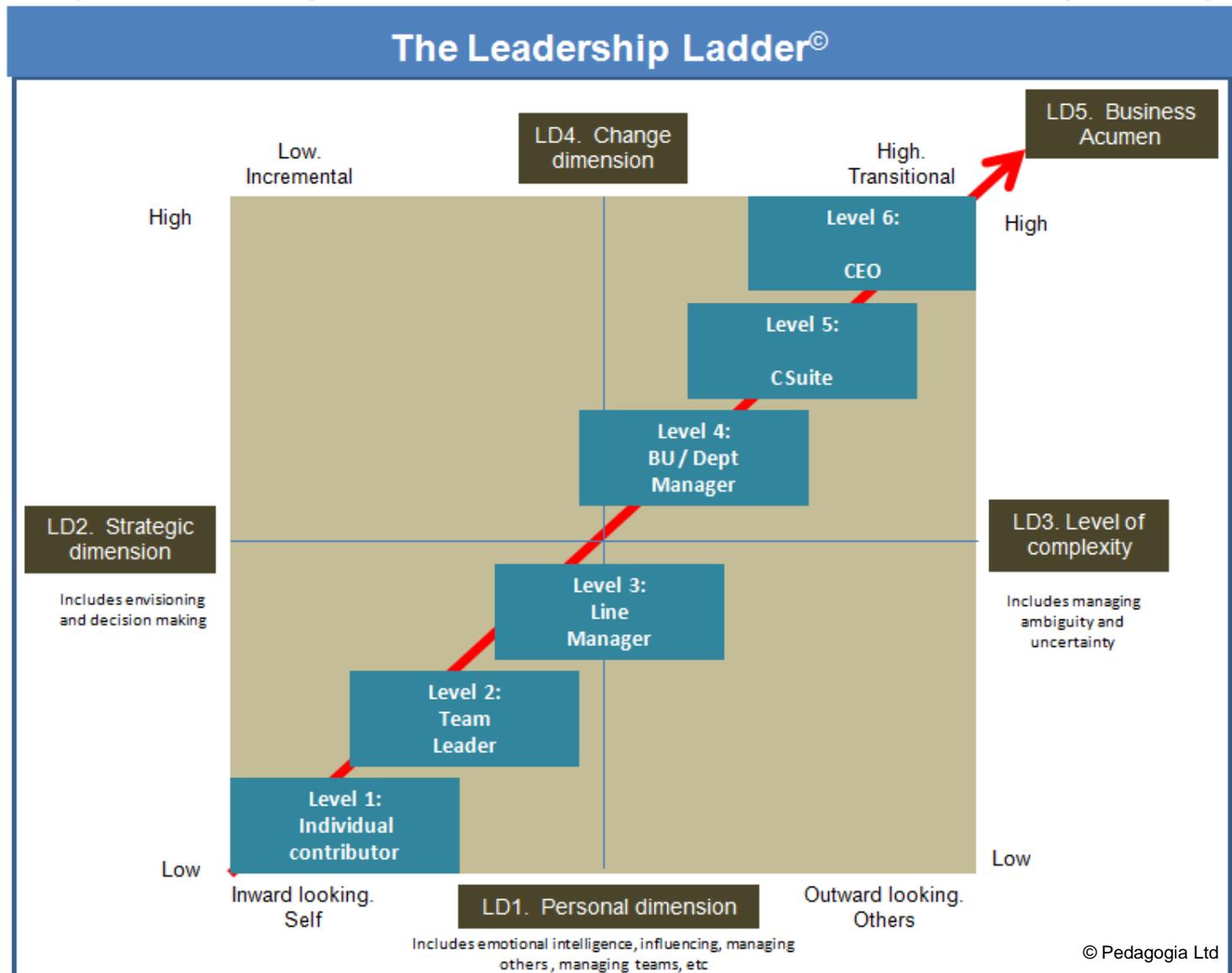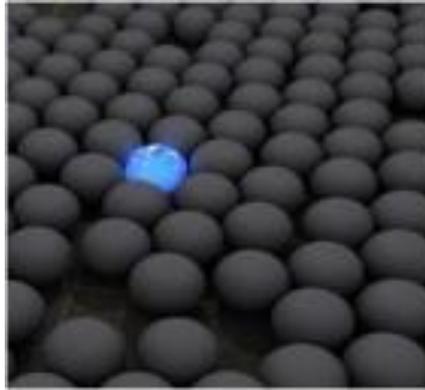
What do these different levels of leaders do? What is the difference between the levels?

L1: Individual contributor

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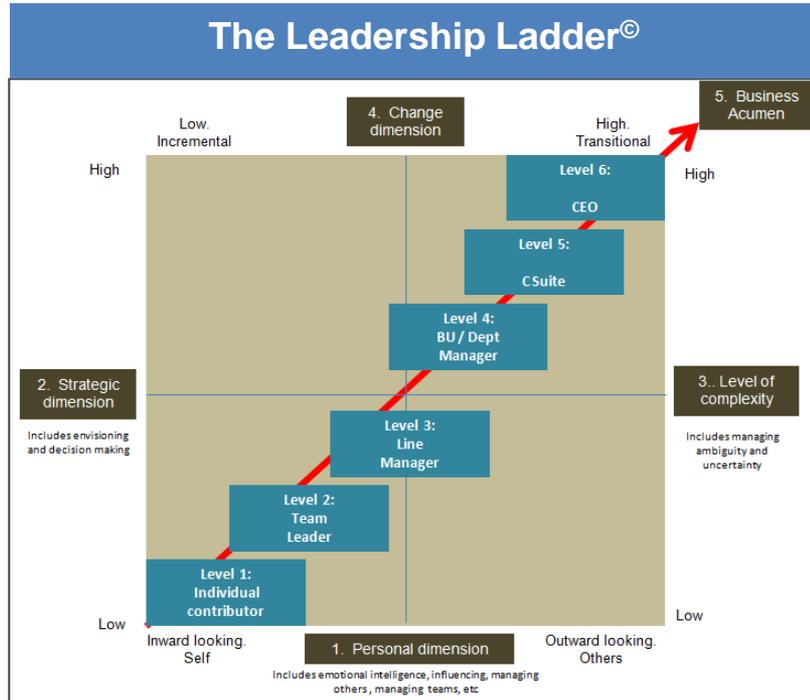
Level 1: Individual Contributor

Raison d'être: Bring technical skills and expertise. Complete allocated tasks

What are you managing?:
1) Yourself
2) Your ability to work in a team
3) Your ability to contribute as requested

Critical leadership challenges:
- Learning leadership behaviours
- Displaying Junior Leadership potential
- Proposing incremental change

L2: Team leader

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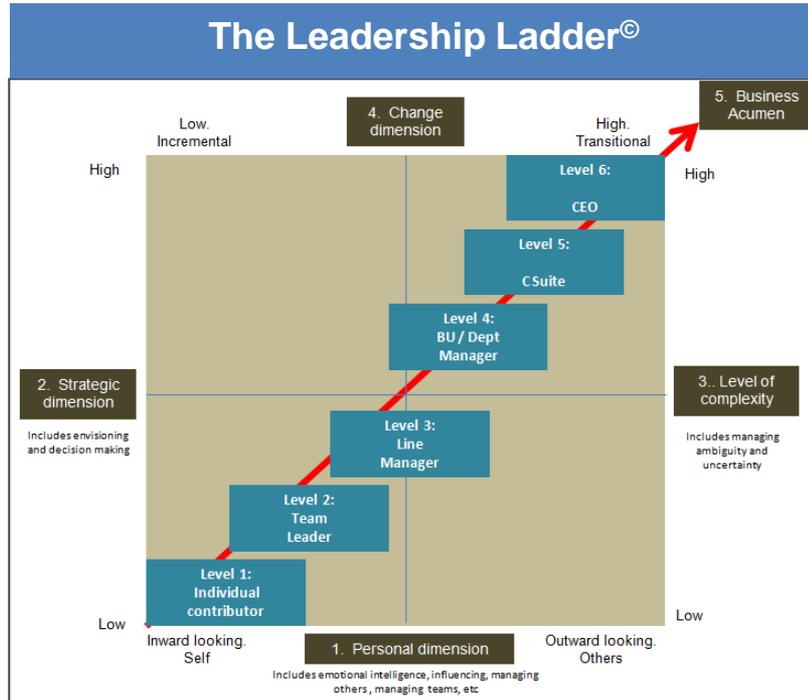
Level 2: Team leader

Raison d'être: Bring technical skills and expertise
Complete allocated tasks by leading a small team

What are you managing? A small team or project

Critical leadership challenges:
- Practicing first steps of leadership
- Exercising Junior leadership
- Proposing and leading incremental change

L3: Line Manager

The Leadership Ladder©

(diagram showing the Leadership Ladder with dimensions and levels)

- 4. Change dimension — Low. Incremental / High. Transitional
- 5. Business Acumen
- Level 6: CEO
- Level 5: C Suite
- Level 4: BU / Dept Manager
- Level 3: Line Manager
- Level 2: Team Leader
- Level 1: Individual contributor
- 2. Strategic dimension — Includes envisioning and decision making
- 3.. Level of complexity — Includes managing ambiguity and uncertainty
- 1. Personal dimension — Inward looking. Self / Outward looking. Others — Includes emotional intelligence, influencing, managing others, managing teams, etc
- High / Low

Level 3: Line Manager

Raison d'être: Managerial skills. Complete assigned tasks through allocation and delegation

What are you managing?: A department or function. Managing others. Managing teams. Managing activities with a primarily technical or functional orientation, typically 'mono-functional' (like 'marketing')

Critical leadership challenges:
- Delivering results on critical dimensions
- Managing the 'today'
- Managing people and teams, including team leaders
- Proposing and managing delegated change

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L4: BU /functional /Divisional Manager

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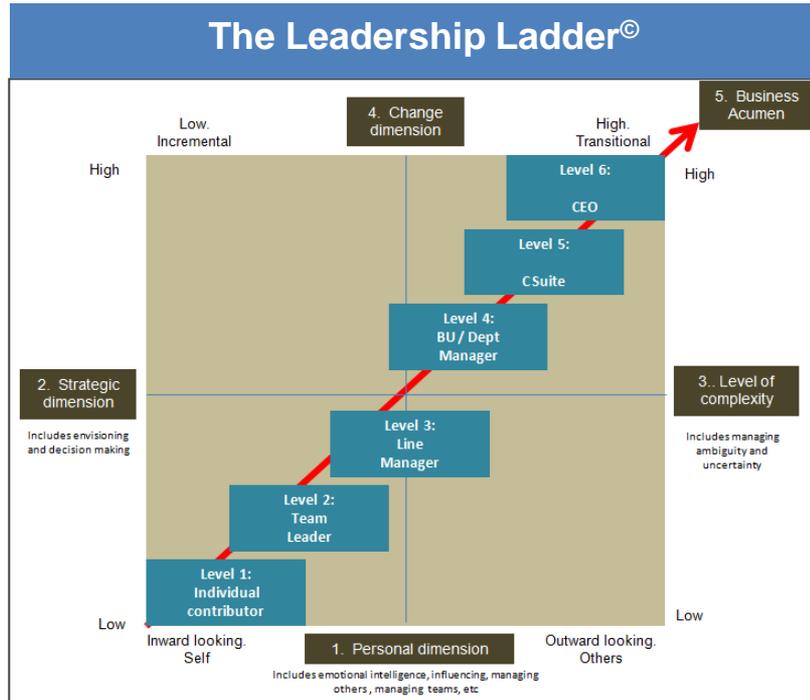
## Level 4: BU /functional /Divisional Manager

Raison d'être: mobilise your given resources and networks to achieve superior business performance across your activity

What are you managing? A significant business activity with P&L responsibility

Critical leadership challenges:
- Managing more complex, multi-functional activities
- Managing multifunctional teams often across borders, remotely
- Managing line managers
- Finding balance between attention to results of today, and building vision of the future
- Proposing and managing delegated change
- Supporting CEO to make transformational change

L5: Global leader. (C level or 1-2 levels below)

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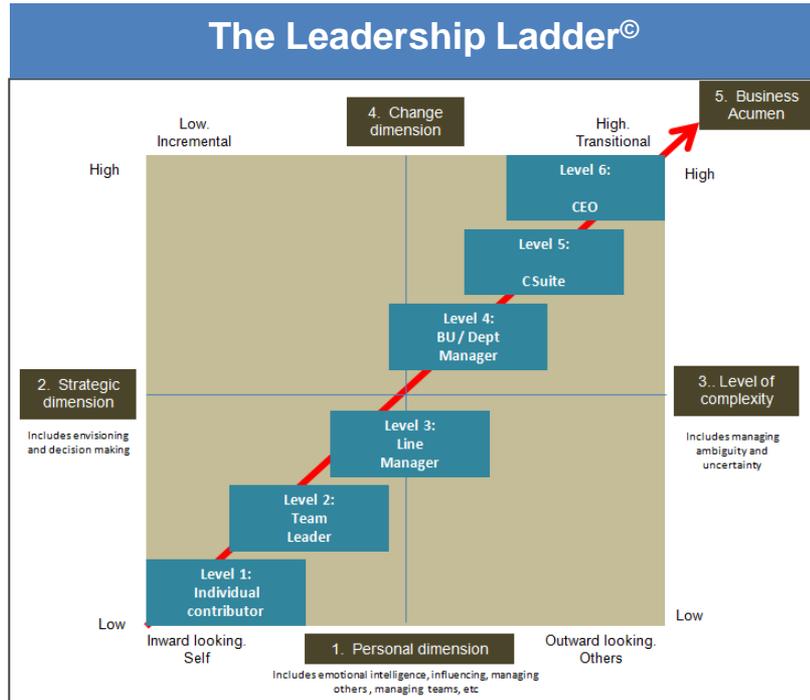
Level 5: Global leader. C level or 1-2 levels below

Raison d'être: Head up and drive a major part of the business . Bring a global perspective and vision

What are you managing?: A horizontal or vertical business on a global scale

Critical leadership challenges:
- Macro forces
- Extremely high complexity and ambiguity
- Supporting CEO to make transformational change
- Balance between your own autonomy, supporting CEO, and team working within C Suite
- Inspiring others / motivating
- Mobilising and deploying assets
- Managing across borders and cultures
- Delivering required business results

L6: CEO / COO

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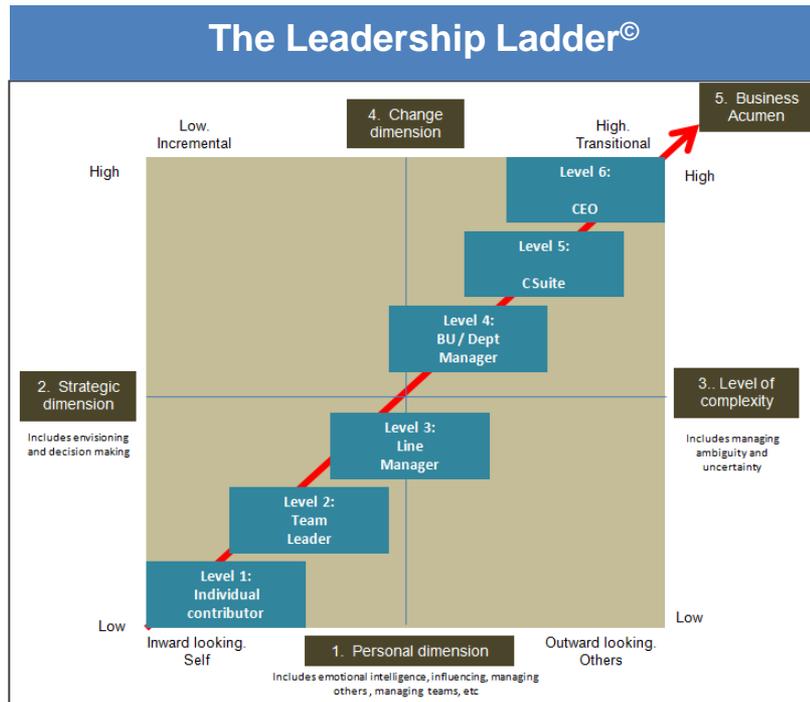
Level 6: CEO / COO

Raison d'être: Initiate, decide, and drive strategy and transformational change. Direct organisation-wide assets to achieve required performance across the business

What are you managing?: A Global business Global change.

Critical leadership challenges:
- Macro and asymmetric forces
- Political forces and influencing
- Strategising and wise decision-making
- Sets stretch goals and expectations
- Managing ambiguity, disruption and turbulence
- Envisioning the future
- Driving transformational, strategic change
- Overcoming powerful vested interests
- Achieving business results
- Inspiring others / motivating
- Setting an example (Modelling)
- Coaching others
- Achieving business results
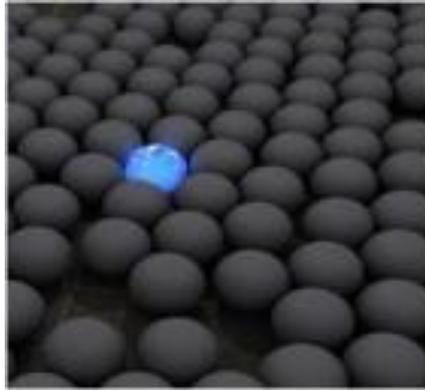
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What are the implications for leaders, arising from these 5 leadership dimensions?

LD1. Typical characteristics of Personal dimension

Details of the leadership dimension	Individual contributor	Team Leader	Line Manager	BU Head	C Level	CEO
Empathy, rapport and Emotional intelligence			✓	✓	✓	✓
Self control			✓	✓	✓	✓
Creativity, innovation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Primarily manages others		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Primarily internal , simple and limited relationships	✓	✓	✓			
Extended complex networks , internal and external				✓	✓	✓
Willingness to address bad news			✓	✓	✓	✓
Motivating / Influencing / lobbying			✓	✓	✓	✓
Manage complex political situations / vested interests				✓	✓	✓
Set an example (modelling)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Courage , audacity, independent thinking				✓	✓	✓

Intensity

LD2. Typical characteristics of Strategic dimension

| Details of the leadership dimension	Individual contributor	Team Leader	Line Manager	BU Head	C Level	CEO
Envisioning					✓	✓
Set short-term strategy and goal, and tactics			✓	✓		
Set long-term strategy and goal				✓	✓	✓
Federate others around strategy and goal				✓	✓	✓
Communicate strategy and goal in simple terms				✓	✓	✓
Seek and builds strategic competitive advantage (SCA)				✓	✓	✓
Look for sources of profit				✓	✓	✓
Understand how to deploy assets and levers				✓	✓	✓
Manage the 'today'		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Secure the 'tomorrow'					✓	✓

Intensity

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LD3. Typical characteristics of Level of Complexity dimension

Details of the leadership dimension	Individual contributor	Team Leader	Line Manager	BU Head	C Level	CEO
Simple, clear, symmetric tasks, objectives	✓	✓				
Simple, clear, problem solving & decision-making		✓				
Medium complexity tasks, objectives		✓	✓			
Medium complexity tasks, problem solving & decision-making			✓			
Highly complex, multi-dimensional, asymmetric tasks				✓	✓	✓
Highly complex, multi-dimensional, asymmetric problem solving & decision-making				✓	✓	✓
Arbitrating, choosing, and electing to not do things				✓	✓	✓
Handling ambiguity, uncertainty and turbulence				✓	✓	✓
Wisdom in decision making						

Intensity

LD4. Typical characteristics of Change dimension

| Details of the leadership dimension	Individual contributor	Team Leader	Line Manager	BU Head	C Level	CEO
Propose incremental change	✓	✓	✓			
Organise and deliver incremental change		✓	✓			
Propose delegated-led change			✓	✓		
Organise and deliver delegated-led change			✓	✓		
Propose CEO-led transformational change						✓
Organise and lead transformational change						✓
Set change vision & direction						✓
Use formal mechanisms to overcome resistance					✓	✓

Intensity →
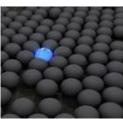
LD5: Typical characteristics of Business Acumen dimension

Details of the leadership dimension	Individual contributor	Team Leader	Line Manager	BU Head	C Level	CEO
Know your business, strategy and objectives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deliver specific tasks to standard requested	✓	✓	✓			
Deliver business performance results			✓	✓	✓	✓
Devise business strategy				✓	✓	✓
Set objectives		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial literacy			✓	✓	✓	✓
Use financial levers to improve performance				✓	✓	✓
Understand and exploit business models					✓	✓
Business 'savoir-faire'			✓	✓	✓	✓
Organise to drive and monitor business results		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Intensity

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The Leadership Dimensions shown by intensity per leader level

	Individual contributor	Team Leader	Line Manager	BU Head	C Level	CEO
LD1 Personal dimension:						
LD2 Strategic dimension:						
LD3 Level of complexity:						
LD4 Change Management:						
LD5 Business Acumen:						

Intensity
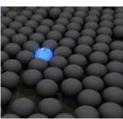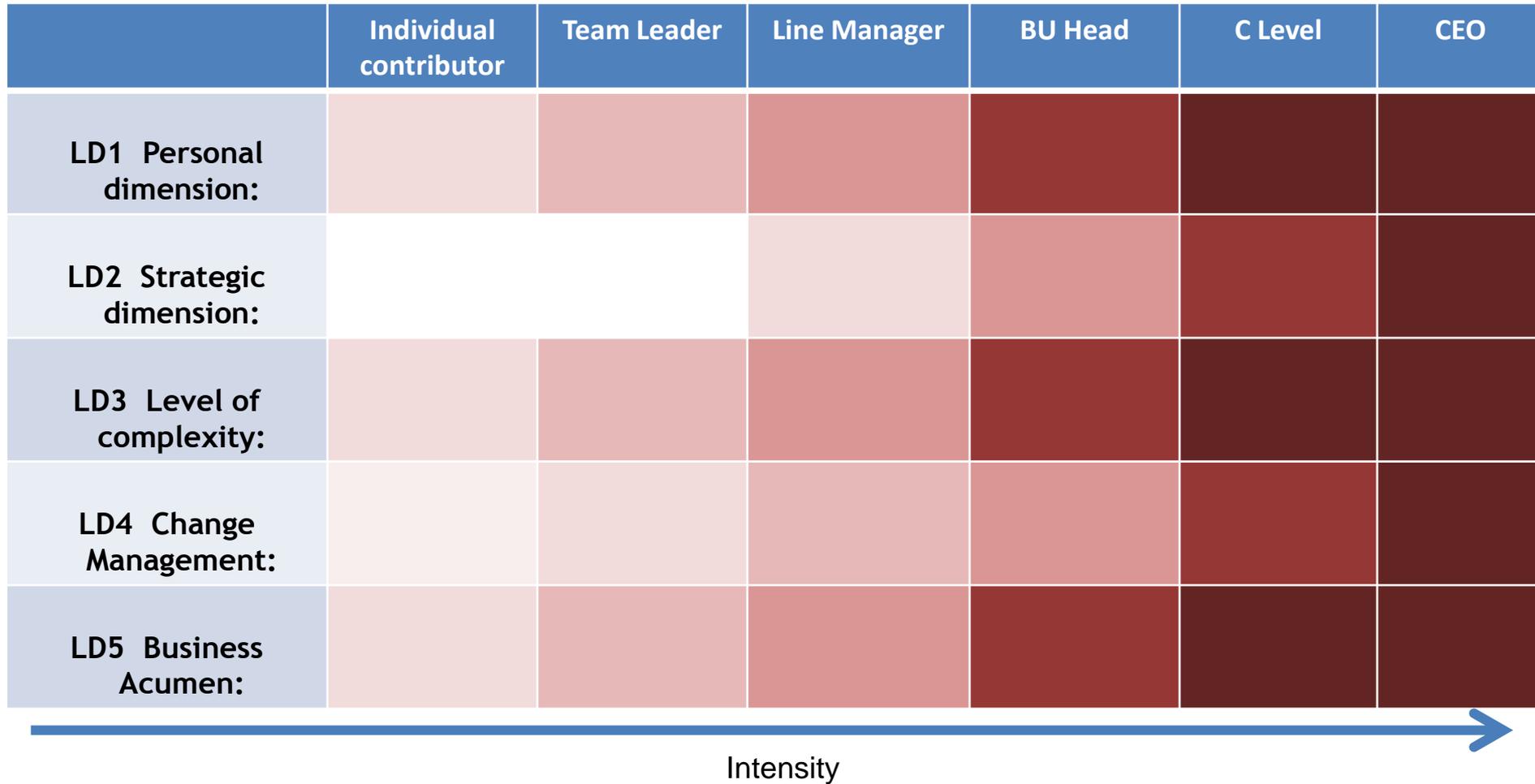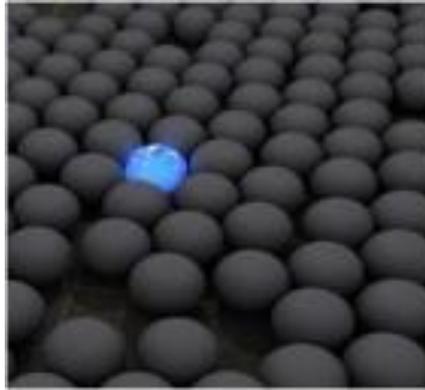
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If 'The Leadership Ladder©' is of interest to you or your organisation , and you would like to know more, or how Pedagogia can help you develop your organisation's leaders, contact Ian THOMAS at ian.thomas@pedagogia.co.uk now