

# DO YOU HAVE YOUR VUCA NIGHT GOGGLES?

By Tom O'Shea, CMC Organizational Agility Practice Leader

***Have you ever looked through a pair of night goggles when it is pitch black dark?***



It really is quite amazing what you can see. Things appear that are otherwise completely invisible to your unaided eyes. These are invaluable tools for use by military forces as well as wild game hunters. Night vision goggles work by using image enhancement technology that collects all the available light, including infrared light, and amplifies it so that you can easily see what's going on in the dark.

Often these night vision goggles are used to help us identify or discover potentially disruptive creatures (sometimes human and sometimes not).

Recently, I participated in a very interesting meeting with some colleagues in another learning and consulting company. We discussed various ways of anticipating change and discovering the forces of disruptive change coming at us, i.e. the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA) that surrounds us. This idea of night goggles came to mind.

Sometimes I think it would be very helpful if there were a corporate variety of vision enhancing technology – ways for helping leaders to “see” what is happening in and around their organizations that often stays invisible. There are many amazing technology solutions for many things – I have my doubts whether we can simplify this equation enough to reduce it to an app or new device. In the absence of such off-the-shelf solutions, business leaders will need to rely on training their perspectives and building awareness of the kind of questions and resources that can to help them recognize where their disruptive change is coming from next.

That is the essence of THE VUCA REPORT – a global collaborative pulse survey we launched two years ago in an effort to help us all better identify, recognize and understand the disruptive forces of change coming at us faster and faster each day. Just like with night vision goggles, as you begin to explore the right questions you can begin to see things you may not have seen before. In THE VUCA REPORT, we have been tracking 35 disruptive factors categorized in the areas of technological advances, economic dynamics, environmental & social issues, geopolitical dynamics, regulatory & cyber security issues and a collection of issues grouped as workforce dynamics.

**What is additionally interesting are the open-ended questions we ask ...**

- What practices are you doing NOW that are helping you counter the effects of VUCA?
- What practices have you seen others do or that you plan to do in the FUTURE?
- What do you see as the OBSTACLES standing in the way of making improvements in your agility?

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Also posted at: <http://agilityconsulting.com/your-agility-advantage/do-you-have-your-vuca-night-goggles/>

Lastly, THE VUCA REPORT has been collecting data about the extent to which leaders believe they have the essential agility capabilities in their organizations to counter the effects of the VUCA context and navigate the future with success. Those capabilities map out on THE AGILE MODEL® as outlined below:

THE 15 CORE CAPABILITIES OF AGILE ORGANIZATIONS & LEADERS				
<b>ANTICIPATE CHANGE</b>	<b>GENERATE CONFIDENCE</b>	<b>INITIATE ACTION</b>	<b>LIBERATE THINKING</b>	<b>EVALUATE RESULTS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visioning</li> <li>• Sensing</li> <li>• Monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting</li> <li>• Aligning</li> <li>• Engaging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bias for Action</li> <li>• Decision-Making</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bias for Innovation</li> <li>• Customer Focus</li> <li>• Idea Diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating Expectations</li> <li>• Real-Time Feedback</li> <li>• Fact Based Measures</li> </ul>

As we all face the VUCA that lies ahead, it will become increasingly essential that we become better equipped with organizational night goggles or at least a better lens and skills to face this otherwise daunting future. The capability areas outlined above give us a good roadmap for discussion and self-examination.

- How are you doing in the area of Anticipating Change ... do you keep getting surprised by your customers and competitors and sometimes even your employees?
- How well are you Generating Confidence internally with your teams and externally with your investors, customers and suppliers?
- How effective are you at Initiating Action on the right things – making decisions better and faster at all levels in your organization?
- How pervasive is the drive for fresh, innovative thinking (FIT) across your organization?
- How well does your whole team know and understand how to Evaluate Results and what real success means for all?

As leaders begin to regularly examine and prosecute these kind of questions (and more), they begin to SEE things in their organizations that they did NOT see before. They begin to see the obstacles AND the enablers for becoming better and faster at those things that really matter. In the south, there is an old saying “when the water level is low – the stumps will show”. Don’t wait until your water level is too low from not adapting as needed to stay competitive and agile. Use these AGILITY GOGGLES to see into your people, processes and technology domains and discover the opportunities for becoming more FOCUSED, FAST & FLEXIBLE ... aka AGILE.

I look forward to hearing your feedback and perspectives about the lens and questions you think will help illuminate the next practices for countering the effects of VUCA in your world and helping you create the agility advantage.



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