OVERVIEW

In 2010, the first article on Leadership Agility in a VUCA World was co-authored by Nick Horney, Bill Passmore and Tom O’Shea in the People & Strategy Journal. The article was entitled “Leadership Agility: A Business Imperative for a VUCA World” and was a wake-up call to organizations about the critical need to identify and develop leaders that demonstrate leadership agility. Since 2010, Agility Consulting has led the way in researching and developing products and services for organizations to identify, assess, develop and deploy leaders with agility.

VUCA BACKGROUND

The dynamic and fast-changing nature of our world today is best described by VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity), a term coined by the US Army War College. Today, there are almost as many mobile phones in the world as there are people. More than one-third of the world is online - a fivefold increase over the last decade. Facebook now has more than 1 billion active users; YouTube gets more than 100 hours of video content added every minute; and over 175 million tweets are added to Twitter timelines every single day. Interestingly enough, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter did not exist a decade ago!
LEADERSHIP AGILITY 2005 - 2014

During the past 10 years, many others (e.g., academics, consultants, business executives, etc.) have become increasingly aware of the critical need for leaders with agility within a continuously changing VUCA business environment. There have been no less than 500 articles, whitepapers, videos, seminars and books on the topic of leadership agility or adaptability in a VUCA world since our leadership agility article was published. Many of these books, seminars and whitepapers referenced The AGILE Model® and original Leadership Agility in a VUCA World article (e.g., Human Resource Transformation, Forbes and UNC Chapel Hill).

Several thousand leaders representing a wide range of industry sectors and locations (foreign and domestic) have participated in a leadership agility seminar designed and implemented through Agility Consulting. While others remain focused at a conceptual level, Agility Consulting continued researching and working with clients in North America and globally to provide relevant products and services that enable organizations to identify, develop and deploy leaders with leadership agility. Currently we are working on another book focused on
leadership agility that has a working title of *Leadership Agility: How to Thrive with Continuous Course Corrections*.

Much has been learned globally over the past ten years about leadership agility and will continue to be shared by Agility Consulting’s *Strategic Agility Institute*, newsletters, articles, whitepapers, webinars, videos, university programs and seminars including:

- **Cost of Lack of Agility** -- Appreciation for the cost of lack of agility, regardless of whether experienced in the public or private sector;
- **Agility as a Leadership Core Competency** -- Many companies are including leadership agility as a core competency for current and future leaders;
- **Talent Management/Scenario Planning** -- Agility Consulting has introduced the concept of *Talent Management Agility™* to many of its clients as a means to integrate scenario planning with the talent review process;
- **Agility Analytics** -- Application of better tools and enhanced analytics resulted in improved processes for organizational decision making; Better analytics to capture the impact of agility (e.g., 2013 -- Using BCG’s Adaptive Advantage Index (AAI), researchers assessed 2,127 US public companies. The 0.91 correlation BCG found between the AAI and market cap growth found that companies scoring 80% - 90% on the AAI showed an average 20% growth in market cap over the 5-year period);
- **Spec Ops Agility** -- Experiences shared from Navy Special Operations to private sector companies about leadership agility under “extreme” VUCA conditions;
Leadership Agility in a VUCA World:

- **Agility Mindset** -- Agility is becoming a new way of thinking about and preparing for trends and patterns of change that in the past were categorized as "unanticipated";

- **Agility Best Practices** -- Knowledge sharing and best practices communication between different organizations is accelerating the application of leadership agility (e.g., application of The AGILE Model® to the way leaders and managers plan for and conduct meetings - see Conducting AGILE Team Meetings card);

- **Agility Research** -- There is significant overlap in research, work, training, etc. that focuses on leadership agility, adaptability, nimbleness and resilience;

- **Universities** -- More universities are updating their programs and communications to include a focus on the topic of leadership agility (e.g., University of Seattle, graduate program at Rollins College);

LEADERSHIP AGILITY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES
(Available at WWW.AgilityConsulting.com)

Agility Analytic Products Focused on Individuals

- **Leadership Agility Profile (LAP)™** -- The Leadership Agility Profile™ 360 is one of the only online 360-degree leadership agility assessment instruments specifically designed to identify the strengths and developmental needs required of leaders in an uncertain and turbulent business environment. The LAP can also be used as a full self-assessment or as "180° feedback" to compare your self-assessment with how your boss or a trusted colleague rates your leadership.
  - LAP Self Report
  - LAP 180 (Self and Boss)
  - LAP 360 (Self, Boss, Peers, Direct Reports and Clients)

- **Leadership Agility Profile for Supervisors 360™**
• Leadership Agility Profile for Project Managers 360™
• Leadership Agility Profile for Sales Leaders 360™

• Agility Personality Profile™ -- The APP™ is a unique personality assessment specifically developed to assess the underlying characteristics of agility. It focuses on the five traits that support behavioral agility, which we uncovered through rigorous scientific research. These five personality dimensions and their associated definitions are:

1. **Focus** -- Tends to create goals and concentrate upon them until completion. Stays on track even when it’s difficult to do so. Becomes fully engaged in tasks.
2. **Confidence** -- Approaches work with a sense of self-assuredness. Has a high degree of trust in own abilities. Eager to face challenges.
3. **Proactivity** -- Avoids a reactive mindset. Anticipates tasks and continually looks for ways to make progress. Accepts the need to act without complete information.
4. **Optimism** -- Looks for positive aspects of difficult situations. Bounces back after failing to achieve. Finds hidden opportunities within problems or challenges.
5. **Inquisitiveness** -- Values the opportunity to learn. Comfortable in new situations. Seeks and benefits from experiences that demand the acquisition of new knowledge or skill.

• Agility Scenario Profile™ -- The ASP™ presents the individual with 24 situations and six potential actions one could take in each situation. The individual rates each potential action in terms of how likely they would take each action. Their responses will be compared and scored against ratings from experts.

• Imagility™ -- The objective of Imagility™ is to help managers and/or facilitators rapidly accelerate the implementation of organizational initiatives. Through the facilitated use of a variety of color images you will begin to create dialogue among participants. Dialogue enables the reaching a shared vision of the situation. Through the use of Imagility™, a facilitator can rapidly enable participants in any problem-solving meeting, new product launch, project team session, etc. to openly clarify issues, challenges and resistance regarding an initiative or challenges faced in the current situation.
Agility Individual Development Resources

- **The Agility Advantage Seminar™** -- Leadership success in the 21st Century depends on an ability to be future-oriented, anticipate and act on external opportunities and recover from unforeseen changes. This highly interactive experience will help participants lead business units and organizations with greater foresight and expose them to the behaviors and processes associated with agile leadership and agile organizations. In addition to the experience shared by the facilitator and participants, a particularly unique aspect of this experience is the presentation by a Navy SEAL leader who will share vivid examples of his application of agility in leading teams during highly volatile environments.

- **Leader LINKS™: Experiential Application of Leadership Agility on the Golf Course** -- Leadership Agility Experienced on the Golf Course - Participants learn how to apply The Agile Model® concepts to a business simulation that is experienced while playing golf. Each member of a foursome practices leadership agility and receives feedback while serving as the leader during at least 4 holes of golf. No golf experience is required, since the primary focus is on the application of leadership agility not a low golf handicap.

- **Leadership Agility Workshop** -- Building Leadership Capability to Sense and Respond during Times of Uncertainty and Turbulence - Learn how to apply The Agile Model® to enhance the critical 21st century core competency of leadership agility. Participants will discover their leadership agility strengths and development needs by completing the LAP 360.

- **Leadership Agility in a Matrix Organization** - Application of Leadership Agility framework in organizations that are designed in a matrix structure which often limits the capability of leaders and organizations to capture the benefits of being more agile.

- **Leadership Orienteering: Experiential Application of Leadership Agility While Competing on an Orienteering Course** -- primarily focused on the team leader to experientially reinforce high performance team qualities. It is a one-day event which is easily integrated into the business agenda and primary purpose of the team (e.g., new project team start-up, new product introduction, new leader within a particular organizational unit, etc.). Generally, the team is subdivided into smaller groups with assigned group leaders.
Leadership Agility in a VUCA World: and given the task of completing an orienteering course in the shortest period of time. Group dynamics are observed by the participants and facilitators and summarized and discussed in the debriefing session. Typical orienteering equipment is used (e.g., map, compasses, flags, etc.) and help bring to life some of the dynamics leadership agility in team settings.

Agility Applied to Executive Coaching

The AGILE Coach™ (OODA Loop Framework for coaching) -- We believe the most effective coaches have an advanced degree in the area of organizational psychology and encourage any organization considering a coaching program to ask detailed questions about education and experience. The core coaching model (four step coaching process) used by Agility Consulting is referred to as The OODA Loop Framework. The first step in our AGILE Coach certification process requires that each coach have the appropriate psychological training represented by the standards and ethics of the Society of Industrial/Organizational Psychologists (Division 14 of the American Psychological Association). The second step in the certification is focused on training and mentoring those qualified as coaches in a repeatable and clearly understood process called The Agile Coaching Model™ -- a four step process designed around the OODA Loop (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act) decision making model developed by Col. John Boyd.

- High Potential Coaching
- Turnaround Coaching
- Development in Role Coaching

LEADERSHIP AGILITY – 2015 AND BEYOND

As the world continues to be characterized by VUCA, we will share our research and best practices regarding Leadership Agility throughout 2015. Included in this research will be a summary of Leadership Agility Profile data collected globally over a period of about ten years across numerous industry sectors and organizational levels. We will share best practices that we have learned from the data and will integrate the results into the work we do with our clients.
We will continue our research into additional leadership agility topics (e.g., Emotional Agility -- EA) as we apply the appropriate psychometric rigor to ensure reliability and validity of our EA assessment tool.