

Vertical Leadership Development Audit

(Rate your organization on a scale of 1 – 5, with 5 meaning we do this very well and 1 poorly or not at all)

- Our OD people understand the difference between horizontal and vertical development.**
The people who design our programs know that horizontal focuses more on skills, information and competencies, while vertical focuses on developing more sophisticated ways of thinking and feeling. They integrate both into our leadership development methods.
- We are aware of and have used some vertical stage assessments with our leaders.**
There are a variety of vertical assessments available. We know about them and use them when appropriate with our leaders.
- Our organization is aligning our leadership culture to our strategy.**
Leadership cultures develop through different vertical stages: dependent/ conformer, independent/ achiever, interdependent/ collaborator. Our OD team has worked out which leadership culture our strategy requires and is designing leadership development to match.
- Our team is aware of the different stages of vertical development.**
The people responsible for leadership development have a good understanding of adult development and how leaders make different sense of the world at each of the stages. Whether explicitly or implicitly, this understanding is blended into the way we develop our leaders.
- Our leaders recognize how important it is to take on heat challenges.**
We have a culture where people take on difficult assignments that they know will force them to grow. This is also reflected in the approaches they use to develop their people.
- We reward and recognize people who take on assignments that require substantial growth.**
Our company's reward systems encourage leaders to take on new assignments and roles rather than stick with one type for too long. Failure during stretch assignments is not punished and we provide resources and support to help people learn from their experience and help turn things around.
- We have a system in place for assigning stretch experiences to high potentials.**
The senior executives take responsibility for developing our high potentials and decide as a group which assignments will be most developmental for which hi-po's in the succession pool.
- Our leadership development programs create 'heat' for participants.**
Formal programs are seen as a chance for leaders to stretch themselves and experiment with new behaviors. Though we offer much support, this comes with equal or greater amounts of challenge. We use facilitators who know how to turn up and turn down the heat for participants.
- We deliberately use many cross-functional teams to collide different perspectives together.**
We know that people grow and our organization thrives when people are exposed to the many different perspectives in our business. Cross-functional teams are designed to include people from many different levels, functions, expertise and demographics.
- We orchestrate collisions in our leadership programs between diverse players.**
We design our leadership programs so that people will view the maximum number of different perspectives available in our business. This means we regularly bring in 'outsiders' who think and act differently from us. We ask them to help us see the familiar from a completely new angle.

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- We use simulations that require people to take on new roles and perspectives.**
We create experiences for leaders that put them into the worlds of other key stakeholders in the organization. We ask them to make sense of the world from this new position and then integrate that perspective back into their real work world.
- Our leaders understand the concept of polarities and how to think both/and.**
Our leaders recognize that our business is full of natural tensions (polarities) that cannot be solved, only managed. They have learned about managing polarities and can identify when they are facing a polarity (rather than a problem) and the steps they can take to leverage it.
- We use coaches who know how to coach through a vertical lens.**
It is important to us that the coaches we use have at least a working understanding of the stages of vertical development. We expect them to be able to gauge the developmental edge of the leader and adjust their coaching style to suit.
- Our leadership programs use late-stage mentors.**
We look for leaders in our organization who operate from later stages of development. We invite these leaders to teach and mentor our high-potential leaders so that they can look at their challenges through the lense of a slightly later stage.
- Our senior leadership team works on its own vertical development.**
Our executive team works with a coach to help them advance the level of their individual and collective development. They have looked at our business strategy and identified the leadership culture that will be required to successfully execute this strategy.
- Our leadership programs include circuit-breaker practices such as meditation and yoga.**
We are aware that many leaders are looking for new approaches for dealing with the heavy demands of their work. We introduce them to circuit-breaker practices that shift them out of their habitual busy modes and into more grounded states of being.
- Bonus: We teach leaders how to use their body to influence their mind.**
We know that the way leaders use their physiology has a significant impact on their mental and emotional states. We bring in facilitators to teach our leaders how to change their physical patterns to help them change their behavioral patterns.

Scoring

Add up the total points that you gave for each of the four colors above.

Red	– The vertical perspectives of the HR/ OD team	/20
Yellow	– The use of heat experiences	/20
Green	– The use of colliding perspectives	/20
Blue	– The use of elevated sense-making	_____ /20

Total: _____

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Interpretation of The Four Factors

61 – 80: Our organization not only has an in-depth understanding of vertical development, but is constantly using tools and methods to develop our people vertically. Vertical development is integrated into our leadership development programs as well as the way we do our everyday work.

31 – 60: Our organization has a mixed level of understanding of vertical development. Some of the tools mentioned above we use but many of them we do not. We do one or two of the three conditions well at times, but certainly not all of them.

0 – 30: The term vertical development is not known by more than a handful of people in our workplace and we do not really engage in the practices listed. While we may occasionally create one or two of the three conditions this is not done consciously and is not done with the purpose of developing our people.