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# **Developing Transforming Leadership: The Case of Warren Buffett**

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## **Introduction**

This paper briefly reviews adult development theory and why it is critical for understanding and developing effective, timely, transforming leadership. At greater length, the paper then goes on to illustrate the theory through a study of Warren Buffett's evolving action-logics across his lifetime of extraordinary wealth-generation, increasingly highlighted, not just by a unique Expert capacity for stock-picking, but also by a growing dedication to business leadership and political-economic statesmanship.

## **Developing toward Transforming Leadership**

Ask leaders what most constrains them and they are likely to point to their circumstances: the market is working against us, a strategic alliance has gone sour, government over-regulation, or another leader's untrustworthiness. Social circumstances do, of course, influence any leader's actions, as do personality factors. One long-ago meta-survey of sociological and psychological research suggested that personality accounts for about 10% of the overall variance in outcomes on average and social variables account for about 25% of the variance on average. Thus, to blame another person's untrustworthiness or broader social variables for less than optimal outcomes is to account for only 35% of the variables influencing the outcomes. The remaining 65% (or almost 2/3) of the variance is labelled as "interaction effects." Can a leader or a leadership culture gain greater control over these interaction effects and thus produce better outcomes more frequently? If so, how?

One way of interpreting "interaction effects" is to say that two-thirds of the variance in any situation where one is playing a leadership role is determined by one's own willingness and the organizational culture's willingness to become aware of and

effectively responsive to the interactions occurring during the event itself. This requires the capacity to accept feedback, interpret it, and redesign action in real time. Moreover, to show that this is the most complex learning task imaginable, “feedback” refers not only to single-loop feedback (feedback about whether one’s current actions are in fact bringing one closer to achieving a short-term goal). It also refers to double-loop feedback (feedback about whether both the goal and one’s action are in fact aligned with one’s longer-term strategy). And it refers as well to triple-loop feedback (feedback about whether one’s action and one’s strategy are aligned or incongruous with one’s lifetime vision).

How does one develop the capacity to act upon single-, double-, and triple-loop feedback in ongoing situations? Adult development theory (Kegan, 1994; Torbert, 1987; Wilber, 2000) – and particularly Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry (Torbert & Associates, 2004; Torbert, 2013) – proposes that we can (but do not necessarily) gradually develop such capacities through a series of transformations of our basic operating “action-logics” during adulthood.

According to developmental theory, all children go through a period when they are guided by an Opportunistic action-logic that helps them establish some control in relation to the outside world (e.g. learning how to ride a bike). Most early teenagers transform to a Diplomat action-logic, which expands their awareness from how to deal with the outside world to how to shape their own behavior in relation to social norms. In traditional cultures, it is probably the case that most people continued to operate from this action-logic throughout their lives. In modern cultures, especially if the person goes to college, late teenagers and people in their twenties often expand their capacity to the Expert action-logic, which seeks control of intellectual systems (e.g. math, accounting, law, medicine, etc.). According to developmental measures (Rooke and Torbert, 2005), most adults never develop beyond the Expert action-logic.

But: a reliable capacity for acting upon single-loop feedback only develops at the next, Achiever action-logic. The Achiever action-logic is concerned with using single-loop feedback to increase the likelihood of success as planned goals are translated through action into outcomes. Managers measured at this action-logic receive higher effectiveness ratings by subordinates than those measured at any of the earlier action-logics. Only at most 15% of all well-educated managers, professionals, and academics develop to next, Redefining action-logic, where one comes to realize that we all bring a deep-seated ‘frame,’ or ‘worldview,’ or action-logic to each situation and that this deep-seated action-logic can itself change. Only 5% of adults measured in our leadership studies evolve to the Transforming action-logic, where one becomes capable of giving and receiving double-loop feedback in mutual influence processes that intentionally transform not only one’s actions but one’s strategies as well. At this action-logic one comes to realize that mutual power is more powerful than unilateral power, in that unilateral power can sometimes make people conform, but only mutual power can transform people or organizations.

One exemplar of a leader measured at the Transforming action-logic is Joan Bavaria, CEO of Trillium Asset Management for more than a quarter century until her untimely death in 2008. With an ever-widening network of friends and colleagues, with all of whom she worked collaboratively, Joan founded not just a company, but the entire sub-industry of socially responsible investing, serving as founding president of the

industry association as well as of Trillium. Before she died, she had won a bouquet of formal honors, from Time's 'Hero of the Planet' to Gorbachev's 'Green Planet Award,' showing that she was a success both in conventional and in creative terms. The prudence of her business management, her up-to-the-moment investing expertise, the personally mutual nature of all her relationships, and the inclusiveness of her generosity and of her collaborative projects were legendary. It was common to hear many of the wide range of people who were close to her say something like, "Joan is a true saint, and I mean it!" (Foster & Torbert, 2005)

If evolving to the Transforming action-logic is today a rare phenomenon, no more than 1% or 2% of adults analyzed in our leadership studies ever evolve to the next Alchemical action-logic. A leader at the Alchemical action-logic can offer and accept single-, double-, and triple-loop feedback by appropriate alchemical blending of unilateral and mutual power in the midst of ongoing action. Olivia, the black woman playing the lead role in the current Showtime series "Scandal," can be interpreted as a leader feeling her way toward the Alchemical action-logic. Careful qualitative studies have shown that extraordinary leaders like Gandhi, Pope John XXIII, Vaclav Havel, and Nelson Mandela all developed to the Alchemical action-logic, and a recent quantitative study (Kelly, 2011) shows that the 'Oracle of Omaha,' Warren Buffett, has too.

Thus, our data suggest that successful developmental transformation of leaders' and organizations' developmental action-logics is among the most significant, yet simultaneously among the most rare and mysterious, phenomena of social life. How can leaders generate transformation in the way they themselves, others, and whole organizations or nations make meaning? We will use a close study of some episodes in Warren Buffett's development as the source of illustrations for several distinctive causal factors in adult development more generally.

### **Warren Buffett's Development**

Paradoxically, for the many who believe that material success in business and life requires "cutting corners," Warren Buffett, one of the richest men alive may qualify as a beacon of lifelong self-development that radically changed his managerial style and objectives over time. Whereas at the beginning of his career Buffett acted unilaterally, squeezing the last bits of value from "cigar butt" stocks, today Buffett approaches the companies he invests in as partners he can relate to over the longest possible term, rather than as subordinates he can dominate in the short-term. He does the same with his shareholders at Berkshire Hathaway annual meetings, with reporters, and with business students. Rather than pontificating, he turns each encounter into an opportunity for open inquiry and gains trust through his self-deprecating humor and honesty.

His basic conversational principle is simple: "Never lie under any circumstances." Or, as his friend Charlie Munger puts it, "One of the reasons Warren is so cheerful is he doesn't have to remember his lines." (The *principle* is simple; *living up to it* requires enacting a complex and profoundly ethical work of art through one's way of living one's life.) This art requires that one make oneself alertly vulnerable to inquiry and feedback if one wishes to wield "mutually-transforming power." Buffett has often demonstrated such a capability, but perhaps never in a more extended and publicly sensitive situation than when he suddenly became interim CEO during the Shearson-

Lehman ethics scandal in 1991. He began rebuilding public trust in the company within 48 hours by conducting a press conference on a Sunday afternoon, during which he opened himself and the company to hours of questioning, and media-and-public trust of the company began to build again. This man who, less than 20 years before, preferred working literally alone most of the time, now spent months mostly in New York in meetings and press conferences, bringing the company back to a much more even keel, a feat that seemed impossible when he entered the scene.

But, the reader may ask, in what ways has Buffett's developed? He appears from most accounts to have done much the same things his entire adult life. After all, he's been in the same business all along. He has lived in the same home and eaten the same junk foods most of that time. Early on, he created a financial vehicle to give the vast preponderance of his fortune away and has changed that intent only in the sense that he has acted sooner than his death by passing most of it to the Gates Foundation in 2006. Indeed, most of his close friends claim they've never known anyone who remains more the same. What is perhaps most obviously remarkable and ongoingly the same about Buffett is that, in spite of his long-term obsession with accumulating money, he has never let his resulting wealth go to his head, his heart, or his body. He may be the rare rich man who makes it through the eye of the needle when it comes time to choose who goes to heaven.

Nevertheless, once one has a map or a lens to see it, one realizes the qualities of Buffett's character which have transformed in very vivid ways. As Kelly has described in detail in his study (Kelly, 2011), Buffett has gone through seven transformations in his meaning-making, and these seven transformations correspond with the seven action-logics in developmental theory, named *Opportunist*, *Diplomat*, *Expert*, *Achiever*, *Individualist* or *Redefining*, *Strategist* or *Transforming*, and *Alchemical*. It is important to note that in his study Kelly rated randomly chosen episodes from different eras of Buffett's life at one or another of the action-logics. The theoretically-produced sequence of action-logics accounted for 93% of the variance in the actual empirical findings. We will offer only the briefest review of Buffett's 'action-logic biography' here (see Kelly 2013 for more detail) because we will focus primarily on an analysis of what caused his developmental shifts. In this way, we will be able to offer some insight into the dynamics of development.

The *Opportunist* action-logic stage corresponds with Buffett's first business ventures at (yes) six and into his teenage years. His opportunistic business adventures often talking others into doing things he would rather not have done himself. It is also the period in which he underperformed at school, ran away from home, and stole golf equipment from Sears Department store.

The *Diplomat* action-logic broadly corresponds with Buffett's early years in college where by his own admission he was socially awkward and emotionally immature. His attempts to fit in with others included reading and practicing *How to Win Friends and Influence People* and taking a Dale Carnegie course in confidence building. By the time he met his first wife Susie, he says he was near having a nervous breakdown.

The *Expert* action-logic corresponds with Buffett's introduction to and adoption of Benjamin Graham's value investment approach. Buffett later described

finding Graham's book as his 'road to Damascus' moment. During this period, he worked for his mentor, Graham, and later started his own investment business. This is perhaps Buffett's dominant lifetime action-logic as it most obviously merges with his hard-wired logical/mathematical intelligence and rational temperament, evident from the age of six in his penchant for calculating odds, and continuing to function as a base for his financial acumen to this day.

This period was followed by the *Achiever* action-logic stage and the amazing success of the Buffett Partnership (1957-1969), increasingly influenced by his friendship with his business associate Charlie Munger. Over this thirteen year period, Buffett generated an annual rate of return of 24 percent for his investors versus 7 percent for the market index; \$10,000 invested with Buffett in 1957 had turned into \$157,000 in 1969 compared to \$25,000 from investing in the market.

The *Individualist* or *Redefining* action-logic corresponds with Buffett's 'go it alone' period in his early forties when, encouraged by his wife Susie, he explored having a calmer life. He became more involved in local community affairs and was encouraged by some to run for President. This relatively idle time came to an end with the merging of his various relationships and interests, including his closest business colleague and friend, Charlie Munger, into Berkshire Hathaway.

The *Strategist* or *Transforming* action-logic corresponds with the remarkable period in which Buffett excelled in a wide range of investments and businesses at Berkshire, including his vital 'managerial' role in the saving of Solomon's in the early 1990's.

And finally, the *Alchemical* action-logic, which perhaps only began with the death of his first wife Susie in 2004, is marked by the gradual unwinding of his fortune in Berkshire, marrying his long term partner, Astrid Menks, announcing some succession plans in Berkshire, the unleashing of his first officially sanctioned biography and an increasingly open engagement with the wider business community of which he is a part.

Looking through the developmental lens you begin to see the impact of Buffett's character development on his leadership. This is particularly noticeable in Buffett's changing 'use of power'. In the earlier examples from Buffett's life, i.e., those that match with the *Opportunist*, *Diplomat*, *Expert* and *Achiever* action-logics, Buffett exercises a kind of 'unilateral power' which ensures that he gets what he wants. In the later examples from Buffett's life, i.e., those that match with the *Redefining*, *Transforming* and *Alchemical*, he exercises a kind of 'mutual' power that ensures that others get what they want as well. This shift from a 'unilateral' to 'mutual' use of power lies at the heart of the main transformation in Buffett's leadership.

## **How does Transformation Occur?**

In reviewing the developmental literature it is evident that developmental theory is better at describing the comparative statics of development (what each action-logic in the sequence looks like, and what strategies, action-patterns, and

types of outcomes follow from it) than it is at describing the dynamics of development ('how' movement from one action-logic to the next occurs). As McCauley et al (2006) point out, other than Torbert's action research in the field, there is a relative 'gap in the literature' in respect of good examples of how developmental interventions have facilitated developmental movement from one action-logic to the next. Ed Kelly's close-up longitudinal study of Buffett provides an opportunity to look at this question of developmental dynamics more carefully than before.

According to action-logic theory, 'developmental transformation' cannot be imposed from the outside, nor can it be activated solely from the inside. It can however be brought about by a "vulnerable, vigilant, duo-directional, mutually-transforming kind of power" (a kind of push-me-pull-me process, or mutual dance) operating between two or more developmentally different meaning making systems (Rooke & Torbert, 2005, p. 14). These 'push-me-pull-me' factors between action-logics can occur within oneself (first-person), or in an interpersonal context between a mentor and a mentee, or within an action inquiry group (second-person), or on a third-person scale, when a person takes on a new job role or joins an organization that operates at a different action-logic than one's previous one.

Of course, all of these processes may be occurring at once. If all involve an interaction between one's current centre-of-gravity action-logic and *later* action-logics, then together they will generate powerful catalytic conditions for *progressive* development. If all involve an interaction between one's current centre-of-gravity action-logic and *earlier* action-logics, then together they will generate powerful catalytic conditions for *fallback* experiences. More likely, however, one is encountering *divergent* influences at any given time, some *progressive* and some *regressive*, thereby likely leaving one at the same action-logic.

For example, a subjective, first-person 'push' process may arise through a loss of faith in one's current meaning-making system. This may include: feelings of repetitiveness, irritability, sense of constraint or emptiness, depression or deep existential inquiry. In Buffett's case, we can see how this interaction occurred in his transformation from the Opportunist to Diplomat action-logic. The internal push factor, i.e., the loss of faith with his current meaning making system, was highlighted by his difficulty in getting on with others of his own age, particularly girls, once he got to college.

At about the same time, he discovered an inter-subjective, second-person 'pull' factor to the next Diplomatic action-logic: a mentor at one remove who offered an attractive new way of thinking about and practicing relationships – namely Dale Carnegie and his legendary book *How to Make Friends and Influence People*. Carnegie's approach wooed Buffett out of his first-person Opportunism toward a new a second-person Diplomatic perspective. Warren would literally count how much longer his conversations became if he followed Carnegie's advice not to criticize, but rather to offer "sincere appreciation" of his

conversation partner. (Needless to say, this 'geeky,' 'proto-Expert' way of making friends didn't solve all Warren's problems in this domain.)

On a broader, third-person, organizational level, Buffett was being pulled out of his home and local high school into college, where one could no longer count on the support of local and family norms.

In spite of these different pushes and pulls toward the Diplomat action-logic, Buffett remained shy, overbearing, and uncomfortable in social relations, as indicated by his rejection by the Harvard MBA program when he applied at the tender age of 20. Of his rejection, he later said, "I looked 16; emotionally I was 9."

Also at 20, Warren met Susie Thompson. He wooed her, as awkward as ever, by playing the ukele for her father while she was out dating other guys. This sounds funny and sad, and derives from the fact that both Warren and his sister were severely emotionally abused by their mother when very young. Their mother would explode at them after her husband left for work. As Buffett later recounted, "There would be this flash and then it didn't subside. All your past sins would be brought up. It was just endless (Schroeder, 2008, 47-48)." It would go on for an hour, or even two, until both children were weeping helplessly. His sister says that Warren built an emotional moat around himself from this time and avoided conflict if at all possible.

This is the moat that Susie eventually devoted herself to help lower when she decided to marry Warren. As he later said, "I had all these defense mechanisms that she could explain but I can't... She made me feel like I had somebody with a little sprinkling can who was going to make sure that the flowers grew... I needed her like crazy. I was happy in my work, but I wasn't happy with myself. She literally saved my life. She resurrected me. She put me together. It was the same kind of unconditional love you would get from a parent (Schroeder, 2008, 179)."

While Susie was gradually putting Warren together on the personal side of his life, he moved on into and through the Expert and Achiever action-logics, aided by his business friendships, particularly that of Charlie Munger, of whom Warren later said "we're basically Siamese twins." I am going to skip a detailed presentation of these dynamics, other than to note that if some people can be said to have life-long centre-of-gravity action-logics, the Expert action-logic is no doubt Buffett's, as indicated by the fact that from as early as six years old he loved numbers and calculating odds, and it remains the base of his financial acumen to this day, even though it does nothing to explain how he moved from being an essentially lone investor to becoming the largest employer in the US and probably the most widely trusted, still-active, economic statesman in the world today.

I take up the story of the dynamics of Buffett's developmental transformations again in his move from the *Achiever* to the *Individualist* or

*Redefining* action-logic. On the business side, the internal push factor, the loss of faith in his current meaning making system, is expressed by his sense that he “no longer understood the current business game in the late 1960s.” He was also shocked by the antagonism his unilateral use of power in the buying and selling a company named Dempster Mills had generated, and wanted to develop collaborative rather than unilateral business relationships. This inclination jibed perfectly with his Charlie-Munger-influenced desire to move beyond a quantitative-only, short-term approach of selecting cigar butt stocks, to a more wholistic quantitative and qualitative long term approach to owning great businesses. Buffett was having more fun with the businesses that he now owned and the ‘great’ managers who ran them. He could no longer see the point in chasing high returns from buying poor businesses when he could generate above average returns from owning great businesses. As Buffett describes it, “I was in this Charlie Munger-influenced type transition - sort of back and forth. It was kind of like during the Protestant Reformation. And I would listen to Martin Luther one day and the Pope the next. Ben Graham, of course, being the Pope” (Schroeder, 2008, p.296).

Even more important in Warren’s transformation to the *Redefining* action-logic, his wife Susie was trying to shake him out of his complete preoccupation with business matters toward a less compulsive and more sociable approach to life. He now formulated that he wanted to set “economic goals which allow for considerable non-economic activity.” Susie got him involved in integrating Omaha’s country clubs, in becoming a college trustee, and in listening to Martin Luther King’s 1967 address “Remaining Awake During a Revolution.” He also converted from the Republican party to becoming a Democrat. The influence of his peer-mentors, Charlie and Susie, on Warren’s movement to the first post-conventional, *Redefining* action-logic highlights the importance of generating a continuing group of close peer advisors in one’s later development, when wider institutions tend to inhibit rather than to encourage further development.

It should hardly come as a surprise to us that when Susie Buffett separated from Warren to move to San Francisco, after 25 years of marriage, Buffett suffered a long fallback to the Diplomat action-logic. She left because the children had grown up and left home, because he was still treating Berkshire Hathaway as more of a wife than her, because he was spending more and more time with Katherine Graham, the publisher of the *Washington Post*, on whose board Warren served, and because Susie wanted to spend more time with her tennis coach who was also her lover – though she did not tell Warren this last part.

After she left, Warren was miserable, disheveled, and living alone in a house that was becoming a dump. He called Susie every day, continued to show up with her at various public occasions, and visited her for forty weekends in a row when she later had cancer. Susie in turn begged Astrid Menks, a friend of theirs in Omaha, to look in on and cook for Warren, an arrangement that eventually led to Warren and Astrid living together, with Susie’s blessing. Obviously, this was a post-conventional triangle, about which Warren later

commented, “If you knew the people involved, you’d see that it suited all of us quite well (Schroeder, 2008, p459).”

Susie Buffett’s death itself played a catalytic role in Warren’s development to the Alchemical action-logic in the early 2000s. Finally faced with life altogether without her, he surprised his own children, as well as everyone else, by developing a much closer relationship with them. He also overcame his obsession with accumulating money by giving the vast preponderance of it away to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

This review of some of the dynamics of Warren Buffett’s development has obviously been in many ways a tribute to Susie Buffett and to the mutually-transformational potential and power of women. Thus, it may be fitting to close with a finding from Gerzema and D’Antonio’s book *The Athena Doctrine: How Women (and the Men Who Think Like Them) Will Rule the Future*: namely, that four-fifths of those surveyed in Japan and Korea and two-thirds of those surveyed in the US, Mexico, and Indonesia think the world would be better off if men thought more like women (n=64K).

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### **BOX 1: Is my action-logic Opportunistic, Transforming, or...?**

This question fascinates most professionals who come across the Global Leadership Development Profile and the Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry paradigm behind it. Many ask this question with deep scepticism that a single measure can provide a truly valid and authoritative answer. We agree with this scepticism, especially since the point of seeking the answer is not to have someone else pigeonhole you with a title, but rather for you to become more aware of your own actions and more capable of expanding your own (and others’) repertoire of timely and effective action. Therefore, we argue that four sources of data and judgment contribute to identifying the most inclusive action-logic you reliably have available to you, and we encourage you to use at least three of them in your inquiry into this question:

- First, make your own subjective estimate of your centre-of-gravity action-logic, based on reading *Action Inquiry* (Torbert et al, 2004) and observing yourself at work and at home during the weeks when you are reading it.
- Second, fill-out the GLP sentence completion form, in order to receive a *Global Leadership Profile* report (available at [www.actioninquiryleadership.com](http://www.actioninquiryleadership.com))
- Third, seek the perception of those who know and work with you, offering them the page-long set of summary characteristics of each action-logic available in the GLP report as a basis for their estimate of you.
- Fourth, seek the judgment of a coach skilled and authorized in the use of the GLP, who with an interview, or a debriefing of the GLP will be able to offer an independent assessment of your current centre-of-gravity action-logic.

The *GLP* is a psychometric instrument that measures a leader’s meaning-making and current action-logic. The profile derives from and supplements Jane Loevinger’s extensively validated work with the Washington University Sentence Completion form and has been improved and enriched by the insightful research of our colleague Susanne Cook-Greuter, as well as by a third generation of validity research conducted by Bill Torbert. The sentence completion form consists of 30 fragments of sentences that respondents are asked to finish in their own words.

The completed form is rated by trained scorers, who have achieved high inter-rater reliability. Rating involves allocating each completed sentence to one of the action-logics by matching the completed sentence to a bank of responses. Where no exact match exists, (and this is increasingly the case for sentences from later perspectives), a number of specific rules and skilled judgment help the scorer determine how to categorize the sentence.

Sentence stems vary widely and include: “A good boss...” or “When I am criticized...” The responses are not scored on their overt content. Thus a “A good boss is strict” and “A good boss is gentle” score the same.

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## **Box 2: Comparing the Global Leadership Profile with the MBTI as a Management Development Tool**

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), based on Jung’s personality typology, has been among the most popular of management development tools during the past twenty years. The MBTI approach produces 16 different stylistic clusters, all of which are regarded as of equal value. Thus, the feedback one receives from this indicator is relatively non-threatening. The value of discovering and talking about the different stylistic preferences of different work team members lies in the enhanced appreciation each can gain about how to work with differences. This concern corresponds to the premises of the Individualist meaning-making system in the developmental perspective, and can help managers transform toward Individualist.

The GLP and the Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry paradigm also honors each distinct position as equally valuable in itself. But because the developmental positions are ordered sequentially and the later meaning-making systems are theoretically and empirically associated with greater capacities for successful transformational leadership, it at first appears, especially to persons at the relatively competitive Expert and Achiever positions, that some positions are held to have much greater value than others. Hence, the feedback one receives from the LDP can initially be perceived as more threatening than that received from the MBTI.

On the other hand, feedback, conversation, and developmental planning using the GLP, while more challenging than using the MBTI, can also be more catalytic of personal development and more provocative of organizational transformation. Unlike the Redefining premises honoring differences that underlie the MBTI, the full spectrum of the CDAI paradigm includes the Transforming and Alchemical practices that encourage non-coercive, mutual, transformational decision-making with colleagues, or within meetings, teams, or organizations where there are differences in developmental position at the outset. Thus, the GLP is more likely than the MBTI to catalyze developmental transformation, especially beyond the Redefining position – especially when working with an executive coach, consultant, or colleague who is her-or-himself at a later developmental position.

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**Box 4 – Choose your consultants with care!**

Selecting consultants to work with your organization should always be done with great awareness - it is often a critical choice. This framework powerfully enables leaders to understand the choice with greater clarity. If the task required is highly technical, such as pensions advice, then an Expert deeply knowledgeable in this field may well be the best choice. If the consultant is required to drive a difficult turnaround project through to completion, where focus, team-working and delivery are paramount, then someone operating from the Achiever meaning-making system is far more likely to succeed than an Expert. If, however, a consultant is required to support organizational transformation, or to create an organizational culture that ongoingly supports individual and product development, where the issues are a complex intertwining of different stakeholder needs, competitive pressures and resistance to change, then a lead consultant working from a Transforming or Alchemical action-logic is much more likely to succeed, based on our research to date. In choosing a mentor or executive coach a simple rule applies – choose a person at least one perspective later than yourself.

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