

Processive Leadership Approach (PLA)



Tangible Tools for Leaders

Innotiimi presents a new toolbox that makes it easier for someone in a management position to handle different leadership situations. This package of ten tools, based on a processive leadership approach, offers tangible methods for everyday leadership challenges. Thus, it enables leaders to constantly develop their leadership skills. The motivation of individuals in the organization is improved as a result of active participation and increased personal initiative. Everyone starts to pull together.



THE PROCESSIVE LEADERSHIP APPROACH TOOLBOX

QUESTION

One learns to make different questions in different situations and see their meaning as the producer of thinking process.

EMPATHETIC LISTENING

One learns the meaning of listening. Skills of asking and listening are rehearsed.

THIRST – WATER

Contents and stages of change leadership are scrutinized, making people to want the change and how to handle change resistance. Change can't start until people are ready for the real change.

SCALES

Scales is a tool to analyze change resistance, it is also a way to handle it. Human mind works like a scale, like value analysis would be going on all the time.

MENTAL PROCESSING

How should a manager work to get a real thinking process going on with his people. How should a manager work in order not to become a participant in the process.

DRIVING PILES

Driving piles associates with feedback but more clearly with constructive criticism and makes with self-evaluation very powerful tool to give feedback.

SELF-EVALUATION

Self-evaluation has to do with positive and constructive feedback, usually own development. We will study starting and meaning of self-evaluation.

GROUP MEMORY

It'll be studied how in a good process notes are done.

OPERA

OPERA is a basic tool of all the group work methods and different process's for solving problems. It can be used in many different situations. Using OPERA's idea even an ordinary conversation meeting will reach a new extension.

MAP

Map is one of the most important tools of a processing manager. With map manager will perceive the whole achievement target.

Managing People – The Biggest Challenge for Managers

Almost all managers are of the opinion that, of all management tasks, managing people is their biggest challenge. There are many elements in managing people, or leadership, that are uncertain, unforeseeable, difficult, and even frightening.

When leading people, managers can never be sure of how, and with what intensity, people react to their management measures. It is often difficult for managers to try to get people involved and committed, especially when it comes to new ways of working and other changes. Relations between people are one especially unpredictable area.

For the above-mentioned reasons, many managers obviously leave things be rather than opt for changes. If a manager has a specialist as well as a management role, these specialized tasks may get priority, while people management gets secondary consideration.

“If managers find themselves in a situation like the one described above, it is mainly due to the fact that they do not really have tools for managing people. Based on our experience, we know that learning to use leadership tools is in fact rather easy if the tools have only been developed so that they suit the task,” says Antti Skyttä from Innotiimi.

“We believe that one does not have to be a born leader. Every manager can develop in the role of a leader with purposeful practice. However – as the challenge is so large and complex – the learning process will take a lifetime,” says Mr. Skyttä.

In other words, every manager has the possibility to develop him or herself into an excellent leader. With the help of the right leadership tools, this self-development is much easier and much more rewarding.

Processive Leadership Approach – 10 Real Tools

The PLA toolbox has been well received by client companies. Here is some feedback from participants in the training programs:

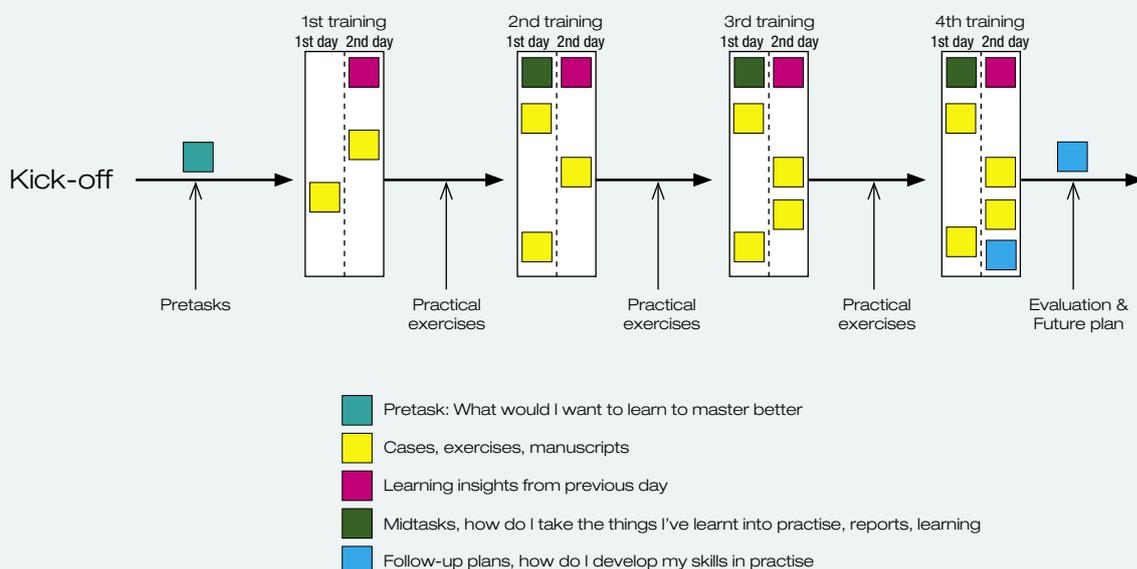
- Finally, tangible tools that enable us to get results.
- We have been struggling with this change already for four years; now we have the tools that help us succeed.
- Why haven't we had these tools before?
- When are our superiors coming to this training program?
- I believe that results will improve with the use of these tools
- Really many good tools for everyday use...thank you!
- This is no rocket science; now success lies in my own actions

Innotiimi has developed a set of principal leadership tools that enables managers to take command of all essential situations they encounter in their area of responsibility in a way that is motivating and effective. In the Processive Leadership Approach (PLA) toolbox, there are ten proven methods that can be applied flexibly, according to the situation.

The PLA toolbox contains an array of methods for all the typical and recurring challenges in managing people. The toolbox helps managers cope with situations like development discussions, strategy implementation, giving feedback, and chairing meetings. It also offers help in less frequent situations, such as conflict resolution, change leadership, or assisting people in taking on responsibilities.

All ten tools are easy to understand and very down-to-earth. Nevertheless, practice makes perfect in this area too: active usage of the tools in everyday management work brings out their real benefits.

The PLA Training Process Helps Gain Practical Skills



The Basic Tools of Managing People: Answer and Question



Antti Skyttä (left) and Juha Kontiainen from Innotiimi have wanted to develop for managers a toolbox with tools, which are easy to utilise.

Leadership Training Aims at Business Benefits

When managing people, a manager can use two basic tools – answer and question. Both have their own basic features, and both are needed. The question has only more recently drawn level with the traditional answer tool. Therefore, managers tend to handle the answer tool rather well, while question as a basic tool is somewhat more obscure. As managers lack experience in using it, question-based tools have been more difficult to adopt.

As Antti Skyttä explains, we still live in an era of ready-made answers:

“Many managers who know how to use the answer-based tools very well try to use them in all possible situations. However, it would often be much better and more effective to use a question-based tool. Using an answer-based tool can even result in people or situations becoming stuck. When using an answer-based tool, the focus of the manager is on issues, not people: actions plans, solving factual problems, the “what” rather than the “how” of change.”

On the other hand, managers who use question-based tools are more interested in what their people think about something and how they feel – in other words, what processes there are in people’s minds, and what kind of solutions people can find together. Therefore, the question is a very good tool to use when striving to get people to understand something or to start dealing with their attitudes. When there is a need to get people committed to something, the question is at its most powerful.

“Summa summarum, a good manager can give good answers when they are needed – and pose excellent questions when necessary,” says Mr. Skyttä of the objectives of good leadership.

It is more and more common for managers to have specialist teams to lead. The education level of employees has risen, and it is common for employees to have as good professional skills as those of their managers, often even better. Employees have a good perspective of practical problems, bottlenecks, and development details, which is why they are the ones who should be working on improving work processes.

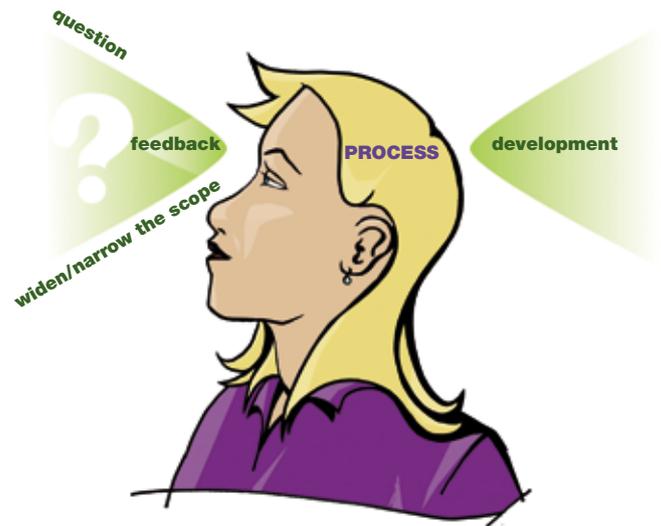
The role of the manager is to get people involved in considering the situation and looking for development needs, working with more personal initiative. The manager has an overview of the process and the way in which it affects the work of the rest of the organization. The manager needs to get people to see where development is needed, create a thirst for developing work practices, and find the right measures to implement the change.

“In training events, managers often want to learn different skills. On their wish list, there are issues such as how to get people to develop work practices, how to learn to work with ‘difficult people,’ how to set goals, how to get people to take on responsibility and authority, and how to improve collaboration between departments. This is why we teach managers to use leadership tools in a manner in which people participate in developing their own work. This is the only way of creating real motivation and results,” points out Innotiimi’s Juha Kontiainen.

Question and Empathetic Listening as Examples of Leadership Tools

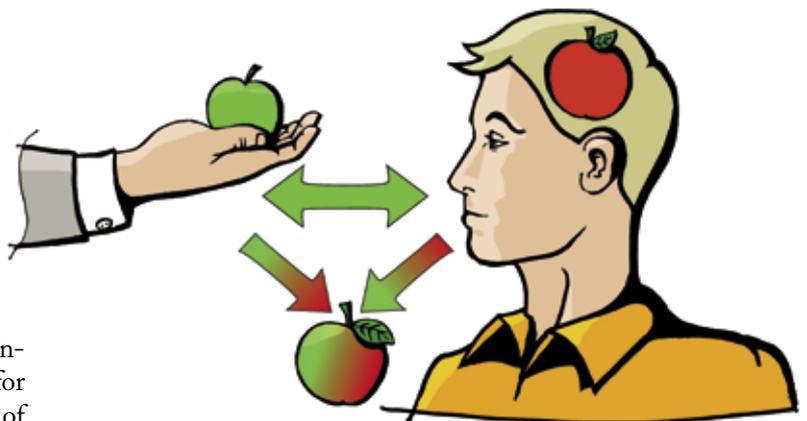
Question as a Leadership Tool

- 1 **A processive question activates the brain:** Because managing people mostly means activating and steering people's mental processes, it is of utmost importance to know how to start those processes in the first place. In fact, mental process will not get started at all without the right questions.
- 2 **Returning the question:** In order for development to happen, it is important that the thought process is activated in the brain of the coached. Sometimes it is important for the manager to know how to return a question to redirect the process in the mind of the coached.
- 3 **Scope of the question:** The scope of the question is one of the most important ideas in directing thought processes. It is the one asking the question that chooses how wide or narrow the scope of the thought process should be. Sometimes it is good to use even a very large scope when first starting up the thought process. When the process develops, the scope can be narrowed according to the situation, and again widened later if needed.



Empathetic Listening

- 1 **Apple:** Usually, to really understand someone else requires getting to know him or her from his or her own point of view. The apple is an image that helps a manager remember this. After all, an apple can be red or green, depending on the point of view.
- 2 **Garden:** We all have our own background – or “mental garden,” as we prefer to express it. The reason for acting this or that way can be found in some part of the garden.
- 3 **Did I understand correctly?:** Many difficult situations are created, prolonged, or aggravated because the manager does not understand something as it was intended to be. Therefore, it is important for a manager to make sure he or she really understands what the other communicator means, or is trying to tell.

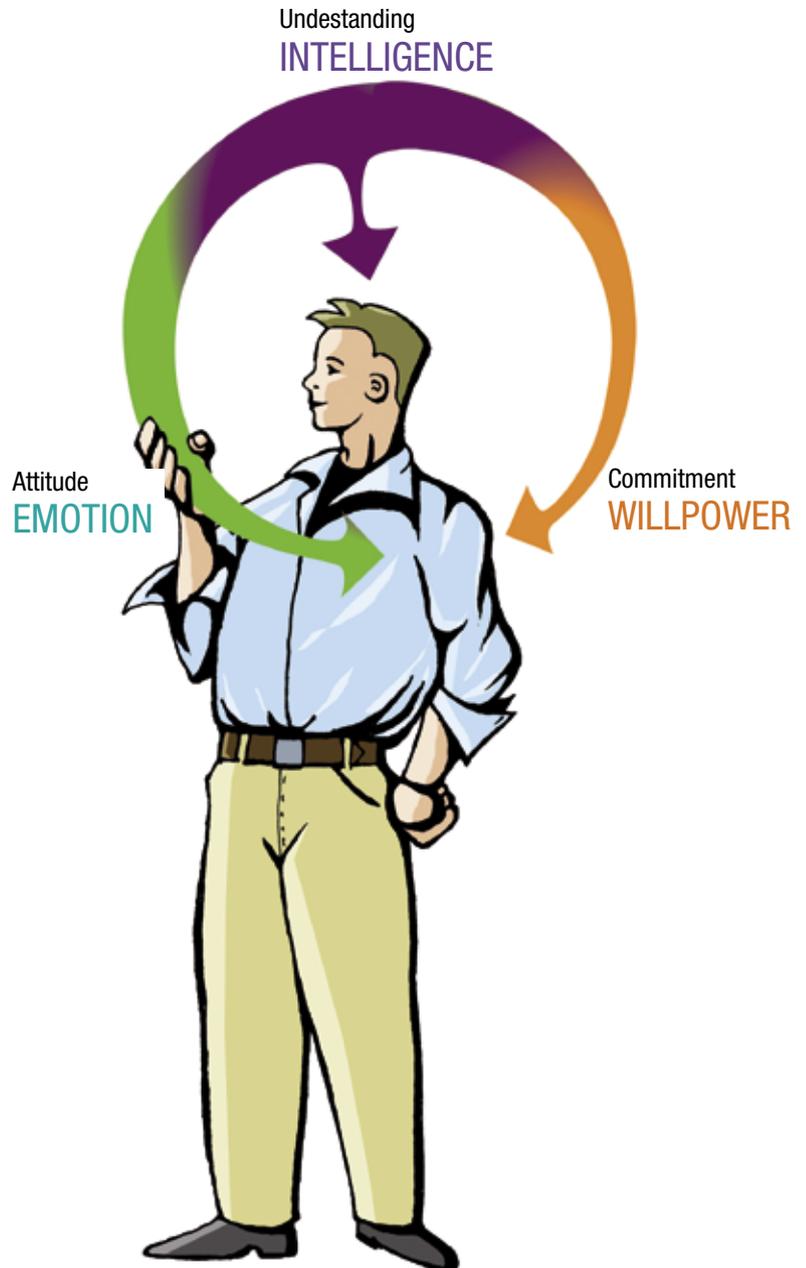


Mental Processes and Directing Them is Essential

The PLA tools have been developed for managing people, which is why they are based on the understanding of how the human mind works. The mind is full of different thought processes. The illustration shows that the mind consists of several “layers.” When managing people, a manager needs to concentrate on observing and activating the three mental layers and their different processes.

The highest layer is that of intellectual understanding – i.e., it is logical and weighs options. Understanding cannot be imposed from the outside; it is built through an inner process – one that can, of course, be activated by someone else. The middle layer is that of feelings and attitudes. Usually, the factors that most affect people’s actions are found in this layer. Finally, the bottom-most mental layer belongs to commitment and will. The only way to reach that layer is through understanding and attitudes.

In fact, all three of these mental layers represent something that no-one can give to somebody else, or tell another to get. This is why none of these mental processes are created if a manager only uses answer-based tools. With the help of question-based tools, all of these mental processes can be started, encouraged, and steered. That makes question-based tools absolutely essential for managing people.



Processive Leadership Approach Inspires Collaboration

200 Valio Managers Attend Innotiimi Training

Inspiring people to participate actively is one of the biggest challenges – and success factors – in leadership. The best way to improve work practices and operational efficiency is to involve everyone in the planning of common goals.

PLA Supports Valio Operations Development

In 2004, Finnish food concern Valio launched a programme to improve its work practices. The goal was to increase productivity, improve well-being at the workplace, and enhance efficiency and flexibility in the order-delivery process at Valio's 15 Finnish facilities employing approximately 2500 employees.

“We started the project without offering adequate management training, but then realised that our managers needed tangible leadership tools for the implementation phase of the project. Having analysed different options, we decided to carry out Innotiimi's leadership training programme, the Processive Leadership Approach (PLA). It combines an effective toolbox for leaders with a hands-on training concept”, says Valio's Human Resources Development Manager, Juha Penttilä.



Mr. Juha Penttilä

Tangible Tools For Down-to-Earth Application

Approximately 200 participants from different Valio sites will experience Innotiimi PLA leadership training. Managers of eight mill sites have already familiarised themselves with the Processive Leadership Approach, and training engagements for the other sites will follow. Participants include managers responsible for processes, as well as leaders and specialists who act as coaches.

“The feedback given by our managers has been extremely positive. Participants report that training has been very tangible, and relevant to everyday workplace situations. PLA tools are really very down-to-earth. In addition, there are practical case studies and exercises in

the programme that promote new leadership skills,” says Penttilä.

Constructive Ideas Through Involvement

To support everyday leadership situations, PLA offers 10 practical tools, such as question and answer, a “basic” tool. Valio's training package consists of three two-day training sessions. Active participation promotes continuity between each session, for example by the use of take-away assignments.

“We know quite well how to use the traditional answer tool, but the opposite, the question approach, requires a new orientation. With these tools, we start listening to our people – using the question tool, we can also hear the quieter people, who often have constructive ideas about how we can achieve common goals,” says Penttilä.

Result: Better Atmosphere

Mr Penttilä says the tools that suit Valio best so far are question, empathetic listening, OPERA, Scales, and self-evaluation.

“With the help of the question, empathetic listening, and OPERA, participation in meetings can be activated considerably. ‘Old-fashioned’ meetings based on one-way presentations and general discussions are giving way to more participatory meeting models. The scales again are a very good tool for mirroring how people feel about something, particularly during change, whereas the importance of self-evaluation cannot be overstated. It is essential that a manager have the right touch – it can be developed, but not without practice.”

Valio has already benefitted from the training programme and application of PLA tools through improved leadership practices.

“People feel they can make themselves heard. The best feedback has been to hear that they truly feel their opinions are valued and responded to,” says Penttilä of Valio's feedback about PLA.

A little PLA-need test.
Answer questions below
by checking the box

	Yes, 90 percent true	No, this is quite often challenging
Making changes is fast and easy in our company		
New methods and working models are easily applied in our organization		
Our employees understand entity of business and are directed by it		
Our employees take responsibility and spontaneously develop their activities		
Our employees openly receive feedback, even critical		
Our meetings are efficient and productive		
In meetings people participate actively		
We can easily bring our development plans and projects to the conclusion so that they are not forgotten on the way		
Co-operation between departments and units works excellently		
Members of management group work together for the best of company and business (activity), even at the expense of their own area of responsibility		

More "No" than "Yes"?
You should find out more about about PLA!

Are you interested in applying the processive leadership approach in you own organization?
You will get more information about PLA and its practical leadership tools from
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