



CIRCULAR LEADERSHIP MASTERMIND TOPIC

BEING STRATEGIC ABOUT YOUR CAREER

Being strategic about your career has 3 components:

1. Having a vision of where you would like to be in your career
2. Cultivating strategic relationships now that can support you to get there
3. Ensuring that you deliberately acquire the experience and skills you'll need

1. YOUR VISION

If there were no constraints and everything was possible where would you ideally want to be in your career?

Having a compelling vision is important because it acts like your north star so you know where you're headed and can plot a path to get there. It also provides you with the motivation to be more strategic about your career development – it pulls you forward like a magnet. You can become proactive rather than simply reacting to external circumstances.

A great way to connect with your career vision and define the stepping stones to get there is to follow the One of many™ Soft Power Planning process (the summary of this process had been provided to you).

Your vision may be at any point in the future that feels right for you – 2, 5, 10, 15 years. It's ok if it's not very detailed– it only needs to be clear enough to give you an idea of a way to move forward and you can trust that the finer details will be revealed as you do. It might even change along the way, so you don't need to worry about it being "right". It will still have given you far more direction and momentum that you would have had without it.

Ignite your changemaker

Another component that can help bring clarity to your vision is to tune into the change that you wish to see in your company, industry or beyond. If you had a magic wand – what is the difference that you would like to make? What's the big thing that makes you really angry or frustrated and think "if only it was like this..."?

What would that look like and what could be the stepping stones to get there? Use the principles of Soft power planning and work backwards from the place of it already having been realised to determine the milestones.

Allow that sense of purpose to infuse your vision and call forth an even greater leader in you. We will often be more courageous and do more to drive our career forward in service of a cause that we care about than if it's just about ourselves.

And if it feels overwhelming, remember that circular leadership is not about doing it alone – it involves collaborating with others. Who else is passionate about this that you could enrol to join you in this mission?



2. CULTIVATE STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

Instead of thinking about this as networking which can make us feel “icky”, define this as:

Nurturing a rich & diverse web of strategic relationships where you help each other develop in business over the long term

Ask yourself –

“who can help me to realise my vision and support my career progress?”

“Who are the people with the information, influence, and connections that I might need?”

“If I was already operating at the level of my vision – who would I be connected with?”

Start cultivating relationships with these people NOW; BEFORE you might need them. Reach out and find ways to provide meaningful value to them first. Build up a dynamic of reciprocity and goodwill with them on smaller things so they are enthused to help you with the more significant career requests down the line.

Ensure that you are nurturing connections with a broad and diverse web of people – different levels of seniority, organisations, sectors, roles, countries etc. This will make your web is rich and robust. Note that people who have strong network of their own are particularly valuable to have in your web because of the people they can introduce you to.

To help you with this, you can use the One of many™ Conscious Network Design tool which I’ve adapted for working women (the summary of this process has been provided to you). Note that it extends into different areas of your life but for the purpose of this topic you need only focus on the Career category

Immediate action steps are

- Identify 5 people who you want to develop a stronger strategic relationship with.
- Decide on 3 action steps you are going to take to cultivate these relationships.
- Set aside time each week in your diary to actively tend to your web of strategic relationships.

3. ACQUIRING THE RIGHT EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

This has largely been covered in the previous topic on Strategic Time Management. Ensure that the projects and tasks that you are doing include things that can set you up with the relevant experience set you up for your vision. If that kind of work is not currently available in your role – be proactive and find it! Have a conversation with your manager or key colleagues to figure out how you might take on more of this type of work.

See if there is any training you could do to up -skill yourself.

As you do this, come from a place of empowerment believing that this will enhance what you have to offer but isn’t essential to get ahead. Be mindful not to fall into the common of trap of thinking you’ll only be ready to advance your career once you done a bunch of courses or fulfil 100% of the job spec!



4. ADDRESS ANY RESISTANCE

If you feel any resistance to or negative thoughts about any of these steps ; write a list of what specifically comes up for you. If you identify that any of these thoughts are based in fear or limiting beliefs (i.e. about your ability or that these practices are manipulative), do the limiting belief process from the previous topic or the PowerType Release process. if it feels like a big recurring theme for you