

## Leadership Development Framework (Susan Cook-Greuter)

Metaphorically speaking, the Leadership Development Framework provides us with one possible account of how individuals navigate the straits of human existence by using navigational lore, common sense, increasingly complex maps, algorithms, and intuition.

Function	The LDF, a psycho-logy of human meaning making which addresses the following essential questions
DOING * coping * needs and ends * purpose	1. <u>Behavioral dimension</u> How do people interact? What are the needs they act upon, and what ends do they try to achieve? How do they cope and master their lives? What function do others play in an individual's life?
BEING: * awareness * experience * affect	2. <u>Affective dimension</u> How do they feel about things? How do they deal with affect? What is the range of awareness and of their selective perception? How are events experienced and processed? What are the preferred defenses?
THINKING * conceptions * knowledge * interpretation	3. <u>Cognitive dimension</u> How does a person think? How do individuals structure experience, how do they explain things, make sense of their experience? What is the logic behind their perspectives on the self and the world?

Table 2. Three main dimensions of each action logic

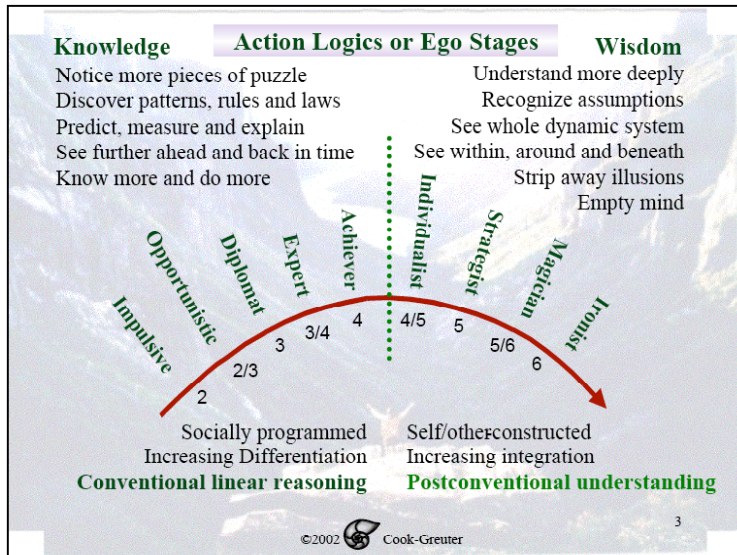
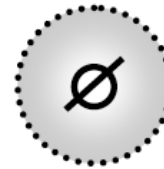


FIGURE 1. ALTERNATING STAGES OF DIFFERENTIATION AND INTEGRATION

## THE PRECONVENTIONAL STAGES

### Infant, State, 1

The pre-social or symbiotic stage, Stage 1:  
Perspective on the self: none



**Cognitive:** 1a; nominal actions  
**Self:** Con-fused, confounded, undifferentiated self  
**Other:** not distinct, source of survival

### Impulsive, Stage 2 (Impulsive: E2)

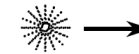
Impulsive Action Logic, Stage 2:  
First person perspective

**Impulsive, Stage 2**  
(Impulsive : E2)

1<sup>st</sup> p. p. .....

1<sup>st</sup> person perspective  
Rudimentary, physical self-labeling, basic dichotomies

**Cognitive:** 2a Primary actions  
**Self:** rudimentary, physical self-labeling "me, mine"  
**Differentiation:** crude dichotomies  
**Other:** fulfillment of needs on demand



First person perspective

**Opportunist, Stage 2/3 (Self-protective E3 (Δ/3 )**

**Opportunist Action Logic, or stage 2/3**

Opportunist, Stage 2/3  
(Self-protective: E3 (Δ)

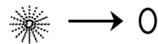


Self-description in terms of own wishes; dichotomous thinking, self-serving

**Cognitive:** 2b preoperational actions  
**Self:** single concrete features, minimal action-based self-description in terms of desire

**Other:** competing for goods, space, dominance, power

**Differentiation:** Beginning sense of others as having their own wants and will to get.

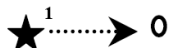


O = other / object

**Rule-Oriented (Δ/3) not in LDF**

**The Rule-oriented stage, Δ/3:** (subsumed under Diplomat in LDF)  
**Second person perspective**

Rule-oriented (Δ/3); not in LDF



2<sup>nd</sup> person perspective  
Single visible external feature;  
Beginning comparisons

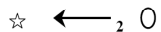
**Cognitive:** 3a primary actions  
**Self:** single external features; beginning comparisons, one variable at a time

**Other:** Sees me also and notices how I am and what I do; beginning recognition that if I want something from other I have to make myself appealing.

Explanation

☆ = the self, the star (the center of meaning making and perspective taking

○ = The other / or object



2<sup>nd</sup> person perspective

**THE CONVENTIONAL STAGES**

**Diplomat, Stage 3 (Conformist: E3)**

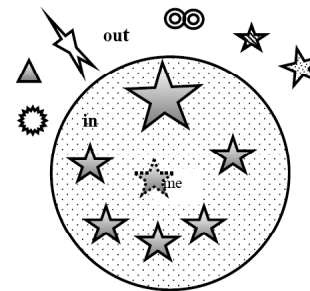
**Diplomat Action Logic, Stage 3**

**Cognitive:** 3b concrete operations

**Self:** several external features; vital statistics given; rudimentary internal states, negative avoided or suppressed

**Two types of other:**

- 1) own family, tribe, group, nation: provides identity, values and protection. Boundaries between self and in-group confused; over-identified
- 2) every one who is different, or not part of my group belongs to the out-group (threat: them vs. us)

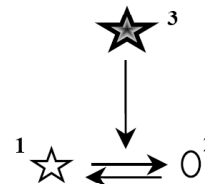


The Diplomat stage 3 describes persons with an early adolescent frame of mind. Their self-identity is defined by their relationship to a group. This leads to confused boundaries between oneself and the group (whether family, team or nation). Being part of this larger entity allows one to be protected and share in its power. The price for protection is loyalty and obedience.

**Expert, Stage 3/4 (Self-conscious: E5)**

**The Expert or Technician Action Logic; stage 3/4**

The Expert action logic (Stage 3/4)



Third person perspective: Self and others as separate persons with unique differences

**Cognition:** 4a abstract operations; beginning ability to take a 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective or to look at oneself objectively

**Self:** Separate self differentiated from others; sense of specialness. Identity = clusters of external attributes, conventional traits, "self-conscious" in the sense of readily feeling uneasy.

**Other:** others too are seen as separate persons who are different from me. Need for constant comparison & measuring. Do others measure up to my ideas and standards?

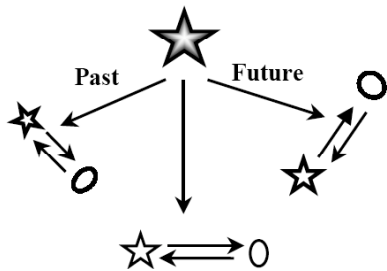
.... they want to be accepted by others because of their difference. They also tend to want to be better than others, stand out from the crowd. The group is needed, but one stands at its periphery threatening to leave, without ever quite leaving. Stage 3/4 persons often feel they have "figured it all out." They know all the answers. They know what to believe. They feel righteous and often put others in the wrong (resistance). They have high moral standards and a strong sense of what should be. They are concerned with fulfilling their responsibilities and duties. They often display compulsive and perfectionist tendencies. The super-ego is very strong.

In interpersonal situation the "yes, but" syndrome is very common. One-upmanship - that is, listening to the other and then adding one's own opinion to remain on top - is typical. On the plus side, Experts are very adept at finding new and different solutions, better ideas, more perfect procedures. Adolescents as well as adults with this action logic see multiple possibilities and alternative solutions.

**Achiever, Stage 4 (Conscientious: E6)**

**The Achiever action logic or Stage 4**

Achiever Action Logic, stage 4



**Expanded 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective:**  
Able to see self and others both backwards and forward in time → patterns of behavior

**Realm:** Self in society, others with similar goals and aspirations

**Time frame:** Self as it is (traits), self as it should be (goals, ideals)

**Cognition:** 4b, formal operations; clear separation of subject and object, knower and known.

**Preoccupations:** Reasons, causes, goals, achievement, effectiveness, contracts and agreements.

**Positive equilibration:** rational, analytical determined, conscientious, fair; successful; competent with high self-esteem

**Truth:** Can be found through appropriate scientific methods if not now > later.

concern to the third person perspective.

Persons at this action logic are interested in reasons, causes, goals, consequences and the effective use of time. They are curious what makes themselves and others "tick" in more than a "why" way.

Achievers generally believe in the *perfectibility of humankind* and in the scientific method to "uncover" truth. Formal operations and abstract rationality are at their peak. People believe that the proper scientific methods of investigation and procedures will eventually lead to the discovery of how things really are, including human nature.

The mood of the stage is earnest conviction, seriousness, idealism and enthusiasm usually oriented towards action.

Given their cognitive capacity, Achievers are in love with the hypothetical, with theories at the espoused level. Achievers are convinced that society can be controlled and improved. They have the frame of mind where formal operations are at their peak and rationality, progressivism, positivism and reductionism have their strongholds.

Achievers can become skeptical. Achiever researchers are known for their intellectual skepticism towards things that are not yet proven. However, they do believe that the laws of the universe can be figured out eventually and proved.

The Achiever action logic is the target stage for Western culture. Our educational systems are intended to produce adults with the mental capacity of the Achiever stage, that is, rationally competent and independent adults. Democracy as a form of government is based on the capacity of its independent-thinking voters to make reasoned and informed choices.

Achievers add linear time (consciously thinking of their past and future selves) as

**THE POSTCONVENTIONAL STAGES**

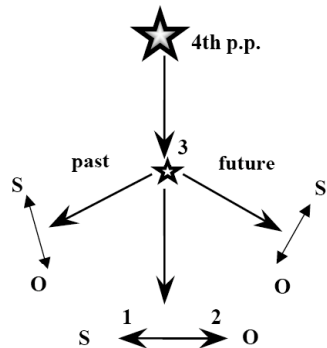
**a) The General Systems Stages<sup>9</sup>**

At the first postconventional level people come to realize that the meaning of things depend on one's relative position in regard to them, that is, on one's personal perspective & interpretation of them. Although the objects themselves are seen as permanent, their meaning is seen as constructed.

**The Individualist, Stage 4/5**

**The Individualistic action logic, or Stage 4/5:**

**Individualist Action Logic or stage 4/5**



**4<sup>th</sup> person perspective**  
**Relativism:** discovery of personal and cultural conditioning and defensive self-deception  
**Cognition:** 5a, systems theory concepts perceived  
**Positive equilibration:** vivid individualism; →concentrate and relish experience in the here and now  
**Truth:** can never be found. Everything is relative; there is no place to stand or judge from □ deconst ructive postmodernism.

**4th person perspective: Standing outside the system**

Individualists distrust conventional wisdom and the hyper-rational tenets of the Achiever action logic. They need to distance themselves from all that went before. In this case, one must reevaluate the self-adopted, yet sanctioned role identities of society and redefine oneself uniquely and independently of them based on one's own experience and conclusions. When one fully realizes that most prior meaning making was socially and culturally conditioned, scientific certainty and the judgmental frame of mind break down. Moreover, Individualists learn to consciously scrutinize their beliefs in order to test their assumptions or to relish the novel mental freedom such a maneuver allows.

Since one's old identities are no longer accepted without questioning, Individualists are preoccupied with a desire for unique personal accomplishments independent of any socially

With the 4th person perspective, individuals realize that things are not always what they were thought to be. Paradoxes (rather than contradictions) do exist. Thus, Individualists may come to enjoy paradoxes and contradictions and no longer try to explain them away "to heck with it! Everything is relative." Linear, intellectual logic gives way to a more holistic understanding of things.

Individualists often replace the focus on causality (past) and goals (future) of the Achiever with a fascination with the immediate present. They need to understand and watch how things unfold. Their focus turns from outcomes and deliverables to an interest in the processes, relationships and non-linear influences among variables.

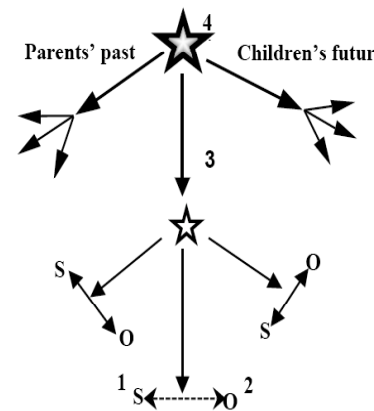
But they may also be feared as unpredictable or dismissed as dreamers and non-doers, especially in an Achiever environment. Their relationships with others are intense and mutually rewarding when there is synergy and choice. When they have to manage others as part of a job, they can be autocratic or idiosyncratic to such a degree, that others find them "impossible to nail down" or "aloof and unapproachable."

**The Strategist, Stage 5**

**Strategist Action Logic or Stage 5**

**Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> person perspective:** Self in embedded in history and multiple cultural contexts.  
**Realm:** Society and others with similar convictions and principles

**Strategist Action Logic or Stage 5**



**Time frame:** own "history, lifetime"  
**Cognition:** 5b, metasystematic operations; General systems thinker  
**Preoccupations:** own development, self-actualization, self-fulfillment; processes  
**Positive equilibration:** well-balanced body/mind integration; autonomous, tolerant, insightful, growth-oriented; high self-esteem; overarching principles  
**Truth:** can be approximated; higher development is better since more complex arguments carry more weight than feeble ones. Higher is more adequate for functioning in an ever more complex global theatre. There are qualitative differences!

The Strategist action logic represents an enlarged fourth person perspective which places the individual's experience into the context of particular societies and within the totality of a person's lifetime. With the expanded time frame and wider social networks, Strategists can perceive systemic patterns or long-term trends and are often valued for that "strategic" capacity. Cognitively they have a general systems view of reality, that is they can comprehend multiple interconnected systems of relationships and processes.

The greatest fear of Strategists is to feel that they have not fulfilled their potential, or to have failed to observe those universal principles they value deeply (justice, tolerance, dignity of all people). Depression is often based on loss of courage, loss of self-agency and guilt for not having fulfilled one's unique human promise. When using defenses, Strategists use mostly mature ones: suppression, altruism, humor, anticipation. When they use less mature defenses, they are able to forgive themselves and move on. "Right now I need to be like this, but I intend to act more maturely again later."

Many Strategists see life as an open-ended journey. They believe that there is no pre-determined way to follow for all human beings. Each individual has to find and create his/her own life style and is responsible for his or her self-fulfillment. Strategists are interested in psychological questions and how to come to terms with inner conflict. Unlike people at the conventional stages, seeking therapy, advice, or consulting from others, is not seen as a weakness, but welcomed as an opportunity. Strategists have faith in their own and other people's capacity to make meaning out of messes and difficulties.

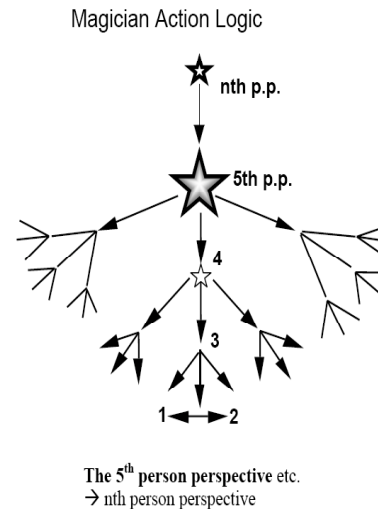
Strategists may genuinely feel principled anger and righteous indignation towards the injustices of the world. They will stand up against society to express their personal convictions or to uphold their principles. Their anger does not usually seek a victim. They live their personal conviction according to self-evaluated, internal standards. "To walk the talk" becomes an expression of one's moral character and authenticity. Irreconcilable role conflicts are felt deeply. Some Strategists become charismatic moral leaders. When they defend what they believe to be a worthy cause, they often disregard negative consequences for themselves. But they may also be overly forceful with their convictions especially when they are fueled by principled anger. The combination of charisma and moral conviction can be a powerful negative force if not kept in check.

**b) The Unitive Stages or Action Logics**

At the second level of postconventional stages (Magicians and Ironists) 10 people come to realize that all objects are human-made constructs, including such abstract constructs as the ego, three-dimensional space and time. All are based on layers upon layers of symbolic abstraction.

At the previous systems stage level, the conventional belief into a permanent object world began to be deconstructed as interpretation and context-dependence are recognized as crucial to any knowledge endeavor. At this new level of differentiation, reality is now understood as the undifferentiated phenomenological continuum or chaos, the creative ground, "das All," or whatever other terms human beings have created to express this awareness of an underlying unity. To deal with the fundamental assumptions about human nature and one's need to make order out of the chaos is one of the main existential concerns of men and women at these two highest stages of ego development. The final action logics in the Leadership Development Framework represent cross-paradigmatic and transrational operations as only the creation of a new way of knowing can hierarchically supersede and integrate all previous knowledge and epistemologies.

**The Magician, Stage 5/6**



**Realm:** Beyond own culture

**Time frame:** beyond own lifetime; global-historical perspective

**Cognition:** 6a, unitive concepts perceived; cross-paradigmatic

**Preoccupation:** inner conflict around existential paradoxes and intrinsic problems of language and meaning making.

**Positive equilibration:** Acceptance of tension and paradox, committed to service of self and others; humility in face of task

**Truth:** No matter what level of abstraction and what level of cognitive insight one gains, one is always separated from the underlying nondual reality

Construct-aware Magicians start to pay attention to their emotional and rational processing behavior. They pay attention to the automatic judgment habit as well as the habits of mind such as our endless analyzing and reflecting in order to create ever more accurate theories of life and nature. All of these endeavors are understood as partial defenses against knowing the impermanence of the embodied self. Thus, at the Construct-aware stage not just cultural conditioning is seen through, but the predicament of living in language.

When people see through the filter of the symbolic construction and mapping of reality, their disposition towards the language habit can change profoundly. In general, Magicians try to remain aware of the pseudo-reality created by words. They realize that the pursuit of objective self-identification and rational, objective explanations of the universe are futile--artifacts of our need to make permanent and substantive that which is in flux and immaterial. To reiterate a crucial point, the language habit works to support the ego's supremacy whenever we make meaning through representations regardless of the specific tongue, power base, or cultural or personal context. At the same time, Magicians appreciate the vital function language plays in human affairs, in social interaction and development.

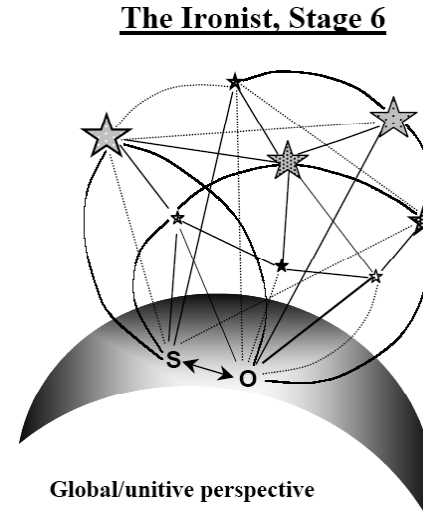
It is a fact of Magician life that there are few other people like them. They may fear that almost nobody understands them in their complexity and sympathizes with their experience, and fearing this, they feel culpable of hubris, of feeling "better" than others. They also observe their own self-attachment and their need for a permanent self-identity by means of ever bigger self-theories. On the other hand, they truly appreciate others' need to make sense of their lives within their own means. They therefore have a much deeper toleration for other's solution to life's conditions without being blind to the possible shortcomings and limitations of such solutions. Sometimes Magicians express a sense of envy at the simplicity of earlier periods because their own world is experienced as so complex. However, given their ego maturity, most are capable of arriving at a dynamic and hopeful balance within these fundamental conflicts: They fulfill their perceived or chosen destiny independently and courageously in full realization of their basic despair and aloneness. When they cannot integrate this awareness, their depression is about man's essential aloneness and inability to create lasting meaning through the rational enterprise.

As leaders, Magicians tend to build their own novel organizations or work alone doing what they perceive to be their best contribution to humanity. They like to take on the roles of catalysts or transformers, but readily leave when they feel their transformational work is done. They feel successful when they have made themselves dispensable, that is, if the organization itself has become transformative and self-reorganizing.

## The Ironist, Stage 6

### The Unitive stage 6 or The Ironist11 Action Logic:

**Multiperspectival;** center no longer in the ego, but the higher Self



**Realm:** universe  
>time/space continuum  
**Time frame:** eternity

**Cognition:** Unitive concepts embraced

**Preoccupation:** Being, non-controlling consciousness; witnessing of flux of experience and states of mind

**Positive equilibration:** Accepting, unassuming presence; fully empathetic, non-interfering ability to be with whatever is.

**Truth:** immanent; experiential truth of interconnectedness and nonseparateness, existence as changing states of awareness within timeless spirit.

The Ironist action logic presents an entirely new way of perceiving human existence and consciousness. The previous way of viewing reality solely from the self's perspective and through the medium of language is transformed. The new paradigm has a **universal or cosmic perspective**. Ironist individuals experience themselves and others as part of ongoing humanity, embedded in the creative ground, fulfilling the destiny of evolution. The two sides of the Pascalian paradox are integrated: feelings of belongingness and feelings of one's separateness and uniqueness are experienced without undue tension as changing perceptions of many possibilities of being. At this level of integration, adults can look at themselves and at other beings in terms of the passing of ages, of near and far in geographical, social, cultural, historical, intellectual and developmental dimensions. They can take multiple points of view and shift focus effortlessly among many states of awareness. They feel **embedded in nature** - birth, growth and death, joy and pain - are seen as natural occurrences, - patterns of change in the flux of time.

On the other hand, Individuals at the Ironist stage may be perceived as "aloof", as not enough engaged in the goals, pursuits, concerns of common humanity especially from the perspective of Experts and Achievers, even Strategists may feel that way.

What is not evident to these critics is that Ironists often act as catalysts in shaping others' lives. In being what they are without excuses, they challenge others' perspectives, and demonstrate a way of being human that is different from the evaluative, conventional ideas about what it means to be an adult. They manifest a deeper security about being, than is possible with a rationally generated self-identity. In contrast to all other stages, Ironists seems to have intense, non-demanding relationships with people regardless of their development, age, gender, or any other identifications. Because they see the dignity in all manifestations of life, they can make others feel worthy and whole.

Ironists have a completely internalized transpersonal or interindividual morality. Inner conflicts and conflicting external demands simply are part of being and need not be resolved or denied, only witnessed. Ironists are no longer driven by desires to be one way or another, to achieve one state or another. Instead they can let go of the unattainable. Concerned with global justice, spontaneity, existence & creativity. Rather than passivity, the non-attached, impersonal stance allows for greater and more direct and powerful action where action is needed.

Ironists can shift focus without effort and behold the whole simultaneously with its constituting variables. They operate within an expanded time frame which includes all of earth's history and its future. Life is seen as a form of temporary and sometimes voluntary separation (Bodhisattva vow) from the creative ground to which it will eventually return. Though the Ironist is aware of him or herself as such a separate and unique embodiment, he or she identifies more and more with all other living beings. The separation of self from others is experienced as an illusion, an invention to safeguard the ego's need for permanence and self- importance and to defend against the fear of its death.