

Four Traits Powering Adaptable Leaders Today

HSM Advisory Future of Work Webinar



Adaptive Leadership

In our latest BetterWork webinar, we spoke with **Lynda Gratton** (HSM Advisory and London Business School) and **Sylvia Taylor** (Safe-Guard Products International) about adaptability and why it is a superpower for today's leaders. Three themes stood out:

1. Adaptability is about balancing tensions.

Whether it's the short and long term, empathy and action, or creating certainty out of uncertainty, adaptable leaders know when to shift their stance.

They pay attention, read the moment, look ahead and pivot as the context demands.

This balance is really all about movement: knowing when the pendulum needs to swing and having the confidence to act.

2. Adaptive leaders don't have all the answers — but their network does.

Gone are the days when leaders needed to know it all.

Today's adaptable leaders build and nurture networks that serve different purposes: sparking ideas, offering challenges, providing support.

They're intentional about who they connect with and how, and importantly, they are generous with their own time — creating a web of insight and expertise they can draw on when it matters most.

3. Adaptive leaders are lifelong learners.

They stay curious and keep building mastery throughout their careers.

Rather than seeing change as a threat, they see it as a prompt to grow and develop new skills, experiment with new tools, and learn from the people around them.

This learning mindset keeps them relevant and resilient in a world where leadership is no longer a fixed destination but a continual evolution.

Questions to ask yourself

Leading through the current complexity requires a level of sophistication that is scarce in many leadership groups. Ask yourself the questions below and take stock of how prepared you are to lead right now with success.

1

Do I have the ability to lead through complexity? Am I skilled at creating an engaging narrative and vision about the future? *Am I skilled at toggling from the default logical doing mindset to the empathetic intuitive mindset?*

2

Do I hold an enterprise-wide mindset? Do I have a view of the changing nature of value creation in the firm? *Do I combine knowledge and judgement into systems thinking?*

3

Do I enable consistent execution? *Do I break down siloes and drive collaboration and knowledge sharing to support value creation?*

4

Am I building tomorrow's leaders? Am I building a culture of trust, honesty and accountability? *Am I helping people to shift from achievers to leaders?*



Leaders are no longer navigating steady, incremental changes; instead, they are grappling with rapid and, at times unpredictable shifts that demand agility.

Professor Lynda Gratton, Founder HSM Advisory



With thanks to ...



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