THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION'S VIRTUAL PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYMPOSIUM

STRATEGIC AND ADAPTIVE THINKING

How we can apply them to innovate ourselves

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Agenda

- What are strategic thinking and adaptive thinking?

- How do we develop and implement them?

- How do we apply such thinking to innovate ourselves?

Strategic Thinking

- Strategic thinking is a valuable skill for everyone

- It enables us to contemplate and make decisions about
  - What is valuable for us, our team, and our company
  - What we choose to focus our time on and what we choose *not* to do

- Strategic thinking increases the likelihood of positively altering our future

Adaptive thinking

- Adaptive thinking is the ability to recognize unexpected situations, quickly consider numerous possible responses, and decide on the best one

- We use it to monitor progress and adjust or shift when circumstances change

Embracing the Mindset

Strategic and adaptive thinking are not one-time activities. As situations change, we have to change our strategy, we have to adapt, and we have to question assumptions.

- Observe macro and micro trends
  - Macro: Impacts society on a global scale
  - Micro: Impacts our specific industry

- Clear our mental deck
  - Be present
  - Reflect on our experiences

- Gain unique insights and strategic advantage

Team and Individual Strategies

- Align our strategy with how we spend our time to make a difference within our organizational context

- Think about our future goals and increase the chances of making them happen

Corporation

Team

Individual

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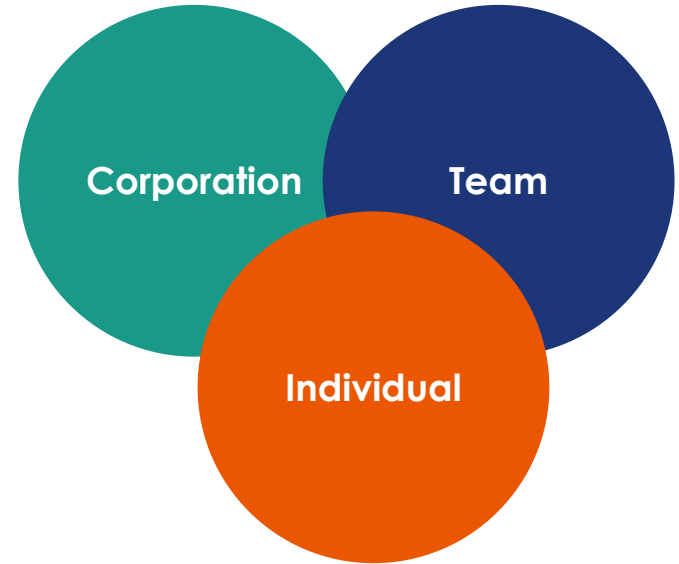
Accomplishing the Strategy

- Conceptualize a path from the big picture down to the minutiae

- Choose goals and tactics to implement our strategy
  - Goals: Possible ways to achieve our strategy
  - Tactics: Activities to achieve those goals

Developing the Strategy

- Seek out big-picture information—macro and micro trends

- Read voraciously

- Identify and seek out well-informed people to learn from their insights

- Understand the past:
    - What happened
    - Why it happened

- Engage in scenario building (envisioning multiple ways the future could play out)

- Adapt when disruption happens and be ahead

Informed strategy

A strategy does not need to be unique to be effective.

- Compare against our competitors:
    - Do we do something similar, or
    - Do we do something different?
- Anticipate future trends in our industry:
    - Will we achieve the next breakthrough, or
    - Will our competitor and why?
- Gather feedback from diverse sources:
    - New voices
    - New perspectives

Strategy with Our Team

- Create a high-level proposal
- Brainstorm and identify objections
- Share with our team and manager
- Get input, feedback, and buy-in
- Maintain accountability with our team
  - Basic level accountability: Check in with who is doing what and when
  - Large scale accountability: Reiterate roadmap and hit milestones
- Regularly evaluate progress against our assumptions
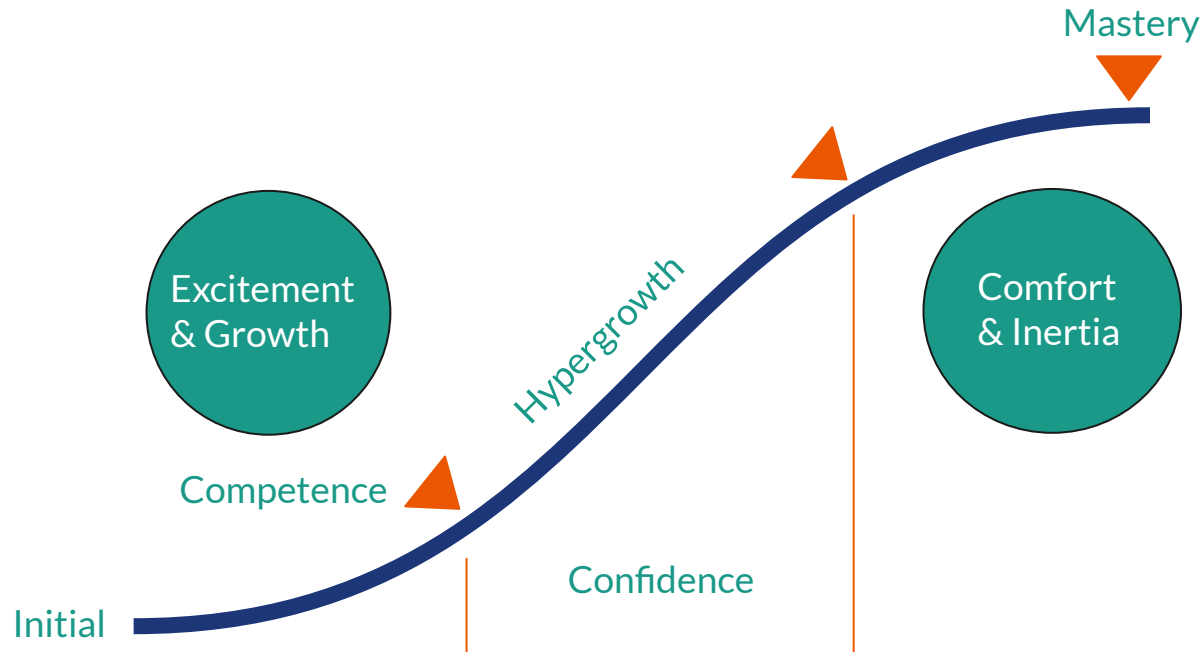
Change Strategy

- Initial expectations are not met

- Major change in circumstances

- A better approach is discovered (run a small test first)

- Disruption happens

  - Formulate a new plan and respond decisively

  - Mitigate complications now and devise options later (adaptive thinking)

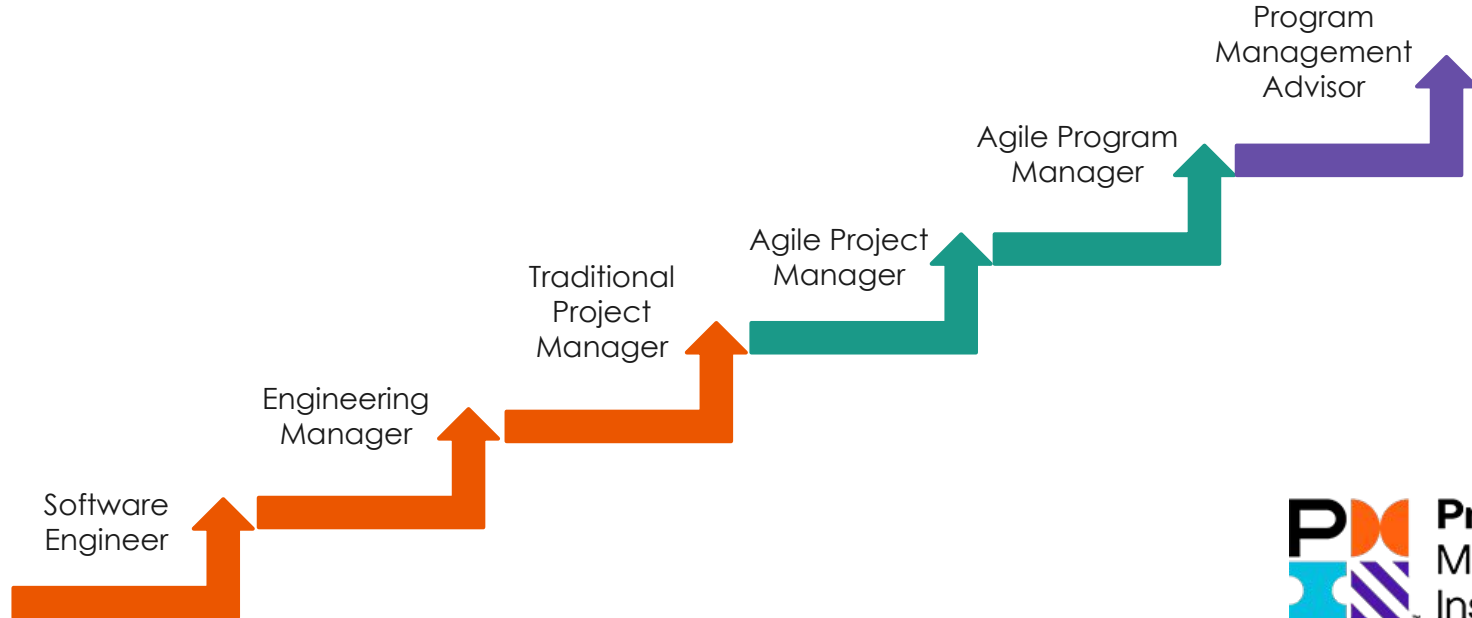 - Go back to the original vision and devise another plan

Make Strategy Time

- Take an hour every week

- Block off time on your calendar

- Sit at your desk or take a walk

- Do it with a co-worker or a trusted friend

Personal Disruption and Innovation

Applying These Lessons to My Career Growth

Software Engineer

Engineering Manager

Traditional Project Manager

Agile Project Manager

Agile Program Manager

Program Management Advisor

Project Management Institute.

Resources

Dorie Clark's LinkedIn Course

https://www.linkedin.com/learning/strategic-thinking/welcome-to-strategic-thinking?u=2265601

Whitney Johnson's LinkedIn Course

https://www.linkedin.com/learning/disrupting-yourself/defining-disruptive-innovation?u=2265601

Bob Iger's Master Class

https://www.masterclass.com/classes/bob-iger-teaches-business-strategy-and-leadership

Let's Stay in Touch

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