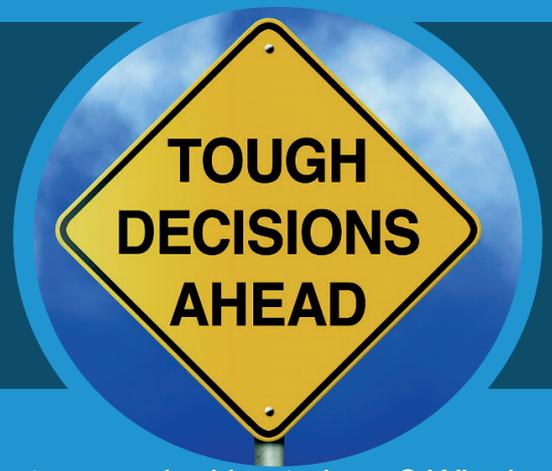


# Are you tired of leading in a VUCA World?



VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) is often used to describe the business environment that we face today. This environment can lead to our feeling helpless and insecure. One of my coaching clients recently lamented: "it doesn't seem to matter what my team and I do, things are moving so quickly I always feel we're fighting fires and never focusing on the long-term. I want to, I just never have time".

VUCA may describe our situation But it doesn't capture any solutions. It was never intended to of course. So I'd like to propose a different acronym - focused on the solution not the problem:

## “Visionary, Unconstrained, Considerate, Authoritative”

This isn't intended to be a “catch-all” description of what it takes to be a great leader. It's meant to be a timely reminder of what a leader can do to make the most of the opportunities that a VUCA world brings - and minimise the risks.

**Visionary** –it's easy to fall into the trap of only focusing on the short-term in uncertain times. To maintain Vision, VUCA leaders constantly put forward a clear, compelling purpose and direction for the team and the wider organisation. What are we aiming to achieve?

What impact are we looking to have? Why is this exciting? What's in it for us? And they adapt the way they communicate the vision to different people, based on insight into their audience's needs and concerns. As a client of mine used to say, “Tell a story. Tell it well it often”. The team need to feel that the vision is the right one – it needs to be "sold" as well as "told".

## “Visionary Unconstrained Considerate Authoritative”

**Unconstrained** – to thrive in a VUCA world it's important to be flexible, adaptable and open to new ways of doing things. VUCA Leaders aren't constrained by the current processes, structures and norms of their organisation.

They are prepared to try new approaches, take calculated risks and dedicate resources to finding new ways of tackling things. Organisations and leaders who capitalise on the opportunities which change brings are constantly looking for innovation within their organisation and from outside.

They often bring disparate ideas together in ways that haven't been done before. True innovation is about creativity AND execution so it's not just about finding new ideas – it's about rigorous analysis, planning and practical application.

# Intrigued?

Visit our website to find out more.



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VUCA leaders 'fail fast', they and their teams monitor progress rigorously and make contingency plans, expecting the best but preparing for the worst. (And VUCA leaders aren't only found in the 'hierarchy', filling designated leadership roles. They can be anywhere. Self-organising teams can be a more resilient and effective unit of work than traditional leader-led structures.)

**Considerate** – operating in a VUCA world can be scary - lack of certainty and being asked to change makes most of us anxious at some level. And stress levels may already be high from the pressures that the team are under just trying to do the day job. VUCA Leaders take time to get to know people and their values, needs and concerns – reaching out to the different constituencies within the wider organisation. They hear and understand with openness, respect and concern. They ask for change with sensitivity and insight into their teams' world, their values and the pressures they are under.

**Authoritative** – this isn't about 'my way or the highway' (that's more authoritarian than authoritative). VUCA Leaders demonstrate confidence in their skills, versatility and capability - and confidence in the potential of their organisation to thrive in a VUCA world.

They also know their own personal limitations. They are open about these limitations, their development and where other team members can do a better job. They know that part of being considerate is to be clear about the changes needed, and to make tough decisions kindly if people aren't able to adapt. They are open minded but committed, listening to alternative ways of solving the problem, but ruthless about finding a way to meet the challenges.

“Being asked to change makes most of us anxious”

At The OCM we work with many leaders who have all the resources, skills and potential to lead in complex and uncertain times. But often leaders lack the knowledge or the time to develop and practise new ways of working and being. They know what they ought to be doing but can't seem to do it, focusing instead on solving short term 'crises'. Great coaching and mentoring supports leaders to develop their VUCA behaviours quickly and for the long-term, so that these become habits of a lifetime. Call us to find out more about how the OCM can help your leaders and your business.

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