

A Best-Practice Case From Eric Fromental About Straumann Villeret SA



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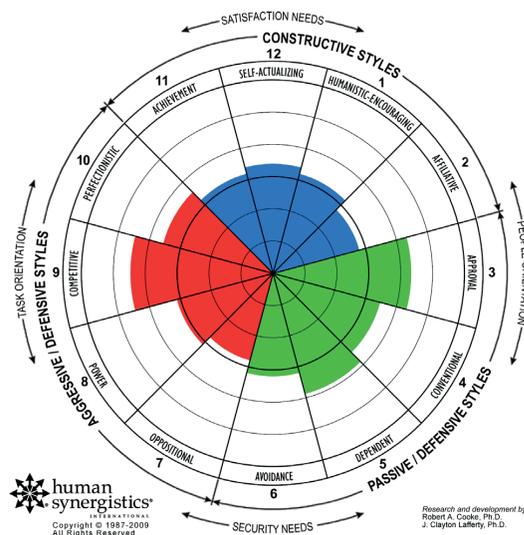
This best practice case focuses on Straumann Villeret SA and how they implemented their Culture Journey program in 2015 and since then have been constantly working on culture to create a highly efficient organization. Eric Fromental, Executive Coach, has been with Straumann Villeret SA for more than four years. Between 2015 and 2016 he became accredited in the Human Synergistics instruments:

- Leadership Impact® (L/I)
- Management Impact® (M/I)
- Life Styles Inventory™ (LSI)
- ACUMEN® Leadership WorkStyles™ (LWS)
- Organizational Culture Inventory® (OCI®)
- Organizational Effectiveness Inventory® (OEI).

BACKGROUND

When Villeret started to work on their culture in 2015 and implemented its “Voyage culture!” (Culture journey) to become more highly efficient, they sought a constructive culture that enhances collaboration between members and employees.

Among several tools, Villeret used the well-known OCI® in order to have a data-driven measurement of their strengths as well as the opportunities for improvement within their cultural norms. Measuring and identifying those patterns of behavior which reduce efficiency was priority #1. Beyond improved efficiency and because of increased volatility and pace of change within the industry, Straumann also prioritized human factors to promote a culture in which members feel engaged, included and valued. The insights provided by HS developmental tools match this objective with a focus on both performance and employee well-being. Moreover, the unique language of the Circumplex – more specifically its colors – contributes to making individuals understand the model and catch its message.



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THE APPROACH

LSI projects are usually composed of 14 focal participants, coming from different teams/departments, to create more inter-department communication during a team workshop. It is important that everyone understands their role within the organization, this understanding together with LSI helps participants to understand how they currently fulfill their role through the actions (LSI2 behavioral patterns) and assumptions (LSI1 self-concept) they make every day.

Eric Fromental explains, that he schedules a 10-15 minute appointment with the focal participants before they choose their respective respondents¹. In this short meeting he explains how to pick respondents, what's the purpose of the feedback, and introduces the concept of LSI; how does the tool work, how long does it take to answer the questions, the timeline, why doing this, etc. This is very important so every open question is answered. Also, Eric Fromental emphasizes the fact that each focal participant is responsible to motivate and communicate with his/her own respondents. Once the project is completed, the reports are scored by Human Synergistics and delivered to the accredited coach Eric Fromental, who then starts the debriefing process. After every participant had their one-to-one debrief session, they all meet for a 2.5 days workshop and are asked to bring his/her own report. The idea of the workshop is to create awareness through different activities, e.g. role-playing, exercises, and good examples enable participants to connect concepts of behavior, leadership & culture. The goal is, that participants leave their comfort zone and look at their leadership style objectively within the context of the business objectives and current culture.

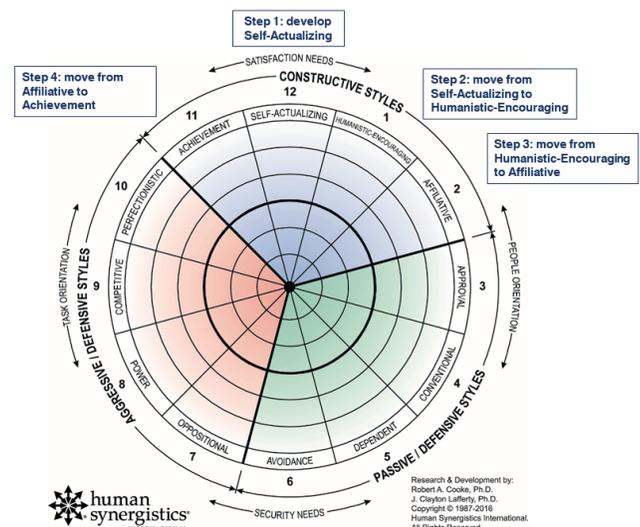
THE DEBRIEFING

Straumann Villeret SA is dedicated to a 10-15 year culture and leadership development initiative. This was done in several "waves" of LSI projects in order to make individuals aware of their behavior and how this can impact positively or negatively their work efficiency as well as their relations at work.

The high-level debriefing focuses on three key steps: Introduce and explain the LSI, Circumplex, and styles.

Fromental asks the participant first some questions about themselves to ensure everything was understood, and how this report might help not only in a professional environment but also in private life. After clarifying the basics Eric Fromental explains the Maslow principles and shows the direct relation between the Circumplex and explains the model in terms of positive and negative energies: "the basement of Maslow's pyramid with the two lowest-level needs drive aggressive behavior and encourages negative energy" what Human Synergistics would refer to as "security orientation". On the contrary, the higher we go in the pyramid, the more we tend to positive energy", what HS would refer to as "satisfaction orientation".

The purpose of this exercise with Maslow is to be able to move toward the next step of the Debriefing: "La spirale de la réussite" (the spiral of success). During this step, Eric Fromental uses the Circumplex to make participants understand why the Constructive styles are recommended and how they are related to each other. "First it is important to create and have a self-awareness of our interest, satisfaction, exciting challenges. Then, it is also essential to work and ask for feedback from others, develop clear communications and good work relations," Eric Fromental says.



Basically, it means moving from Self-Actualizing to Human-Encouraging behavior. Through the feedback of others, the participants also learn to better understand others, how they interact with others and moving forward how they may approach and interact with others more effectively (affiliative behavior). This awareness and focus on more Constructive behavior promotes trust, engagement, communication, and collaboration.

¹ Those who provided feedback in LSI2.

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In addition, we also find lower rates of stress and improved performance. After the spiral of success is clarified, Eric Fromental explains the different styles and their meaning in detail and some key questions are asked of participants:

- What do you want to do?
- What do you want to change?
- How do you want to do it?
- What should be the timing?

It is very important to let the individuals talk, and express their feelings, opinions, invite them to challenge the model as well as the tool to make sure that everything is well understood and have further insights on the feelings and maybe fears. Another important point of the coach is to explain what their role is: why he is doing what he is doing? Why does he like it? “Talk about your own experience in the use of the tool, to reassure the participant and show that you, the coach, understands what the participant is currently going through,” Eric Fromental recommends.

After the introduction, Eric Fromental goes into the report – which is the second step. This is the first time the participant sees his self-description and feedback profiles. He begins with the very last page; the items which measure satisfaction. Indeed, those pages are ideal to let the participants talk about themselves, whether they are happy at work, in their life and whether they are satisfied by their current situation, both privately and professionally. It is a moment where the participants will share a lot of information about themselves. The mission of the coach here is to listen and show that he is listening carefully, without judging.

The most important is to understand the state of mind of the participants: So, it is not necessary to ask too personal questions. Therefore, starting with questions about hobbies, other activities, can inform the coach about the personality and about the level of stress of the individual. The point is also to emphasize to the participant that their development and career result from their own choices too: it's not only their manager who is responsible for it.

Formentel further explains “one of the messages of the LSI is to show that there should be two people involved in the participant's development: the participants, and their immediate manager.

For this reason, I consider higher-level-managers individual feedback as being very important.”

After going through the satisfaction items, Eric Fromental goes to the summary perceptions, to “gain” as much information about the participants as possible. Then, Eric Fromental moves to the “others” summary perceptions to enable the individual to compare themselves with what others say and how do they see themselves; as a “victim” (Passive)? A “knower” (Aggressive)? Or a “player-learner” (Constructive)?

Once this step is done, Fromental will continue with the Circumplex in detail. This step is divided into several stages:

Stage 1

Self-Profile: Drawing the preferred circumplex and compare it with the actual. Together they have a look at the main cluster, what are the two main styles and whether the participant agrees with the actual profile.

Stage 2

Description by Others: Drawing the preferred Circumplex and compare it with the actual, looking at the description by others and using the same process as he did with the self-description profile.

Stage 3

Review the self vs. feedback comparison: When reviewing the similarities and differences between the self and feedback profiles, try to get input from the participant by asking questions like; what do you think? Is this you? Usually, there is a common trend between the explanations and descriptions by others.

Stage 4

See where the participant can reduce negative energy and develop positive energy. Eric Fromental prefers to express the profile referring to “negative” or “positive energy” rather than focusing on the colors “green” or “red”. He said it's easier to explain to the participant that the aim is to help the individual to reduce their focus on the negative, risks, fears, and insecurities. This method of guiding participants to reduce Aggressive and Passive behavior as an initial development step can be very helpful. Oftentimes before a participant can focus on becoming more Constructive, we first must work to reduce any insecurities which may be holding them back from taking effective action.

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Stage 5

Pick three styles to improve. Participants are instructed to pick three styles from the Circumplex that they would like to develop

Stage 6

Review the item-level feedback and try to find targets of change. “First it is important to explain the meaning of the data, scores and the difference between raw scores, percentiles, median and so on,” Fromental says. When analyzing the item level feedback, Eric focuses usually on the upper lines (items with the biggest impact) and spend most of the time on the red and green styles. The purpose is to find levers for change the participants can act upon to develop themselves.

Stage 7

Look at breakout profiles and relate to the spiral of success. Eric reveals them one after the other. Most of the time he spends on the manager breakout and relates this back to the “spiral of success”. He also recommends that, if possible, participants should share and discuss their development plan with their manager, to put a constructive dialogue in place.

The last stage is to concentrate on the development: first and foremost, to check whether the participant understood the whole purpose of the tool and whether this makes sense to the individual. “The role of the coach is to listen but also, to be able to provide the coachee with ideas, support, maybe concrete examples and leave them with themselves they can connect the styles with day-to-day cases”, Eric says. Additionally, Eric recommends that participants focus on their own development first. Before leaders can begin promoting a Constructive culture, they need to be able to promote Constructive behavior within their teams, and before they can do this effectively, they must be able to promote Constructive behavior in themselves. It all starts with LSI, good data, skilled and experienced coaches and empowered and open-minded leaders coming together to create positive change.