MetaMindfulness Competency Framework and Key Concepts

Overview

MetaMindfulness is a powerful tool for navigating the complexities of modern leadership. It integrates deep awareness with intentional action, providing leaders with the ability to manage both personal and organisational challenges with wisdom and compassion. Below we provide:

1. The Future-Ready Leadership Matrix:
This matrix outlines the key competencies leaders will need to suceed in the future, it locates MetaMindfulness as a critical skill for navigating uncertainty and complexity.

2. A Summary of the six elements of MetaMindfulness "3 A's" and "3 I's":
A concise explanation of the inner and outer dimensions of mindfulness—Awareness, Attention, Acceptance, Incongruity, Impermanence, and Identification—that form the foundation of this practice.

3. The MetaMindfulness Competency Framework:
A practical guide to developing the knowledge, capabilities, and behaviours necessary for effective MetaMindful leadership.

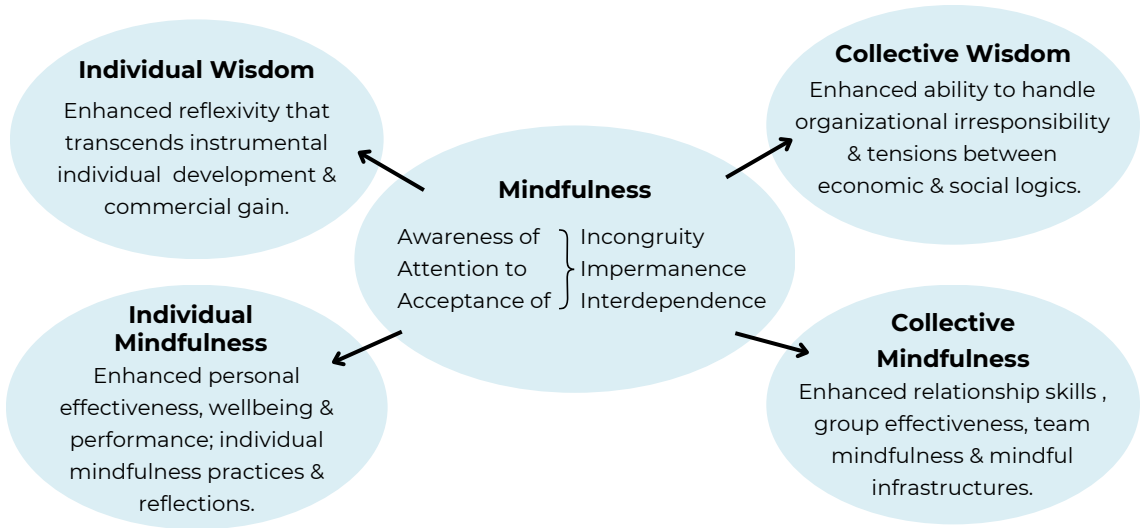**4. Key Insights for Leadership:**
Selected insights from the paper that highlight how MetaMindfulness can be applied to enhance leadership effectiveness in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world.

For those interested in a deeper dive into the theoretical underpinnings of these concepts, the full paper is available here.

META
MINDFULNESS

Four Forms of Mindfulness - MetaMindfulness

Individual Wisdom
Enhanced reflexivity that transcends instrumental individual development & commercial gain.

Collective Wisdom
Enhanced ability to handle organizational irresponsibility & tensions between economic & social logics.

Mindfulness
Awareness of
Attention to
Acceptance of
Incongruity
Impermanence
Interdependence

Individual Mindfulness
Enhanced personal effectiveness, wellbeing & performance; individual mindfulness practices & reflections.

Collective Mindfulness
Enhanced relationship skills, group effectiveness, team mindfulness & mindful infrastructures.

1. The Future-Ready Leadership Matrix:

See over page.

2. The elements of MetaMindfulness the "3 A's" and "3 I's":

To provide a comprehensive understanding of MetaMindfulness, it is helpful to review the following table which synthesises its key elements into a concise summary. MetaMindfulness encompasses both the **Inner Mindfulness Experience** and the **Outer Mindfulness Experience**.

The Inner Mindfulness Experience includes the "3 A's" - **Awareness, Attention, and Acceptance** - focusing on clarity of perception, metacognitive regulation, and a compassionate, open attitude toward experience.

The Outer Mindfulness Experience is characterised by the "3 I's" - **Incongruity, Impermanence,** and **Identification** - which address the inherent contradictions in life, the transient nature of existence, and the challenges of self-identity and attachment.

Together, these six elements form a holistic approach to mindfulness that not only emphasises present-moment awareness but also engages deeply with the broader, dynamic aspects of experience, providing a robust framework for mindful leadership.

The Future-Ready Leadership Matrix:

ADAPTABILITY & FLEXIBILITY
- Situations
- People
- Leadership Style
- Flexibility
- New Technologies
- *Leading virtual teams*
- *New information Systems*

VALUES
- Results-driven
- Hard-working
- Trustworthy
- Care for the well-being of others
- *Curiosity*
- *Authenticity*
- *Optimism*

COGNITIVE SKILLS
- Clever
- Ability to conceptualie ideas
- *Creative/innovative*
- *Critical thinking*
- *Analytical*
- *Ability to synthesize*
- *Strategic thinker*
- *Creative*
- *Entrepreneurial mindset*

TRANSFORMATIONAL ABILITY
- Charisma
- Leading change
- Ability to develop a vision
- Inspirational
- Implementation ability

Leadership competencies Light Blue = From Traditional Leadership Literature

SELF-AWARENESS
- Understanding one's own needs, wants, drives, and expectation
- Self-confident
- Tolerant of stress
- Purpose-driven
- *Self-reflection*
- *Self-regulation*

SOCIAL SKILLS
- Interpersonal skills
- Close with people

COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- Oral communication
- Listening
- *Written communication*
- *Mastery of new media technologies*

HUMAN ORIENTATION
- Individual consideration
- Helping others help their skills
- Coaching
- Providing feedback

ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS
- Planning
- Organisation
- Distributing roles
- Setting objectives
- Providing structure
- Providing procedures
- Following up

ABILITY TO HANDLE COMPLEXITY
- Ability to cope with uncertainty
- Navigate within networks
- Navigate within systems

KNOWLEDGE
- Expertise
- Mastery of new media technologies
- Ability to manage and share knowledge
- Continuous learning
- **Cross-functional competence**

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP
- Ability to adapt to different cultures
- International experience

Leadership competencies Green = From Emerging Leadership Literature

COLLABORATION & PARTICIPATIVE LEADERSHIP
- **Discussion and exchanges with others**
- **Openness to new ideas from others**
- **Involving others**

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC SKILLS
- **Focusing on customer satisfaction**
- **Solving problems for customers**
- **Customers as partners**
- **Co-creation**

DIGITAL COMPETENCE
- **Digital literacy**
- **Data analytics**
- **Digital vision & strategy**
- **Digital business modeling**
- **Digital tools & technologies**
- **Real-time interactions with stakeholders**
- **Focus on customer experience**

COMPETENCE FOR FINANCIALIZATION
- **Centralized decision making**
- **Coercive leadership style**
- **Mastery of Financial IT**
- **Expertise in Finance & Financial strategies**
- **Able to balance value creation & value extraction activities**
- **Short-term orientation**

Leadership competencies Red = From 21st Century Leadership Competency Literature plus ***bold italics***

SUSTAINAILITY COMPETENCE
- **Sustainable business models**
- **Consciousness for social & environment impact**
- **Strategic approach to sustainability**

CRISIS MANAGEMENT COMPETENCE
- **Know the 5 stages of a crisis**
- **Transparency**

Meta-Mindfulness 3 x A's
How we use our mind
- **Attention**
- **Awareness**
- **Acceptance**

Meta-Mindfulness 3x I's
How we understand reality
- **Impermanence**
- **Identity**
- **Incongruity**

THE Mega Leadership competency = Purple **Meta-Mindfulness**

Notes:
Building on Ngayo Fotso, G. M. (2021). Leadership competencies for the 21st century: a review from the Western world literature. European Journal of Training and Development, 45(6/7), 566-587.

3. The MetaMindfulness Competency Framework:

Table 1 Mindful Leadership Development Matrix

	Knowledge Knowing that	Capabilities Knowing how	Observable behaviour	Peformance outcomes
Individual mindfulness	• Incongruity There is an inevitable gap between our aspirations and achievements, and between our experiences and how we interpret them. A lack of recognition and consequent reflex reactions are an unnecessary and counter-productive source of suffering, pain and stress • Impermanence A constant state offlux and change exists inourselves (thoughts, feelings, sensations,existence), as well as in others, the worldaround us and our relationships with them.IdentificationWe are often trapped within and seek to satisfyand sustain an illusory'self', however we can bereflective and make choices about thelimitations of these ideas and our self-narratives.	• Awareness . . . of the incongruous and impermanent nature of our experienceand identifications, . . . of the difference between experience and phenomena and ourthoughts about the same. • Attention . . . to notice the changing mental, physical and emotional states in ourselves and others, and having the capacity to choose what and how to attend to them .. . . to direct attention in a disciplined manner towards the challenges of incongruity, impermanence and identification. • Acceptance . . . by adopting an open, curious & compassionate attitude towards our experiences, our thoughts, and our perspectives on and judgements about others.	Demonstrated awareness ofself, others, and complex environments Demonstrated regulation of attention and double loop reflective metacognition Demonstrated calm andcompassionate responses to stress and in attending to relationships	e.g. low levels of reactivity and negativity e.g. sustainable capacity to select, maintain and switch attention e.g. cooperative social relationships
Individual wisdom	• Incongruity We subordinate ourselves and others to self-imposed purpose, and maintain illusions of control about achieving such an end. • Impermanence We are influenced by differing, changing, historical and temporal constructions of who we are and should be, the degree of control we have, the projects we should undertake and the ideals we should pursue. • Identification We have illusory and exaggerated senses of an idealised self to which we subordinate ourselves. We are influenced by our self-narrative and the self-centred ideals fostered by commercial and individualistic ideologies	• Awareness . . . of subordination to transient, self-imposed, and commercialized forms of self-centredness and control. • Attention . . . regulation and disciplined meta-cognition of such forms of subordination, as they are manifested in ourselves, others and the relationships we establish. • Acceptance . . . through open, curious and caring attendance to such self imposes traps and their transcendence through reflection, relational dialogue and compassion.	Demonstrated meta-skills of self and other awareness in defining and negotiating individual and relational purpose. Demonstrated meta-abilities in self-regulating behavior based on such awareness Demonstrated meta-qualities in open, curious, and compassionate responses to challenges.	e.g, high level of commitmentand goal alignment e.g. rapid and positive response to strategic redirection e.g. high levels of engagement with teams and followers during challenge

3. The MetaMindfulness Competency Framework cont.

Table 1 cont.

	Knowledge Knowing that	Capabilities Knowing how	Observable behaviour	Peformance outcomes
Collective mindfulness	• Incongruity There are risks of disaster and threats to survival due to misunderstandings and traps resulting from rigid and divergent views of:environmental/institutional realities and requirements; shifting group tasks; and varying individual contributions and responsibilities. • Impermanence There is an irreducible degree of change and uncertainty created by complex situational contingencies and unpredictable developments in all collective (group, relational and institutional) endeavours. • Identification We are routinely blinkered and trapped by habituated and institutionalized judgements, embedded in rigid and unreflective forms of group think and collective mindlessness about the goals we pursue and the means for their attainment	• Awareness . . . of the emergent and situated nature of collective action and risks of partial and habituated viewpoints in adapting effectively to changing circumstances. • Attention . . . regulation and metacognition in interaction, by groups and broader collectivities towards such experiences • Acceptance . . . through open, curious, and compassionate attendance to the experimental and risky nature of all interactive, relational, group and institutional endeavours	Established mindful infrastructures Demonstrated mindful organizing values, behaviors and practices Demonstrated openness to and understanding of the challenges of group endeavours	e.g. low levels of accidents e.g. high levels of goal attainment in collective projects e.g. effective group dynamics and a low fear environment.
Collective wisdom	• Incongruity There are inherent uncertainties, ambiguities and contradictions between goals and means for their attainment, and contradictions between, narrow institutional interests, economic imperatives and, broader social/ecological concerns and objectives. • Impermanence Complex institutional, inter-institutional and global environments are characterized by inherent instabilities, uncertainties and threats to sustainability. • Identification There are ongoing, inherent and shifting conflicts and contradictions between narrow organizational identities and strategies and, broader global concerns, survival and progress	• Awareness . . . of mechanisms that prevent institutions being responsible for harm and inherent contradictions between economic and social/sustainability concerns • Attention . . . regulation and disciplined metacognition by the collectivity towards the above contradictions • Acceptance . . . through openness, curiosity, and caring towards the transcendence of such tensions, within collective forms of relational reflection and compassionate dialogue in complex purposive and global systems	Established routines, practices, and structures attending to such concerns Institutionalized cultural values and power structures that acknowledge and experiment with such tensions Demonstrated institutional reflection on mechanism that prevent organizations being held responsible and socioeconomic contradictions	e.g. level of resourcing and scope of corporate social responsibility e.g. responsible operational outcomes achieved by following principles and procedures e.g., application of ongoing enquiry into principles and responsible values when reacting to critical tests

4. Key Insights for Leadership in a VUCA World

In the face of the Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous (VUCA) environments that characterise today's global landscape, leaders are increasingly challenged to find effective strategies for navigating uncertainty. The paper "Leadership in Uncertainty: The Mindfulness Solution" by Dr. Elizabeth King and Professor Richard Badham offers several key insights into how MetaMindfulness can enhance leadership effectiveness in such contexts:

1. Embracing Complexity with Mindfulness:
The rapid pace of technological and societal changes creates a level of complexity that can be overwhelming. MetaMindfulness equips leaders with the cognitive and emotional tools to remain grounded and responsive in these environments. By fostering a deep awareness and acceptance of the inherent complexities and uncertainties in their surroundings, leaders can better anticipate challenges and adapt their strategies accordingly.

2. Beyond Surface Mindfulness:
The paper critiques the superficial application of mindfulness—often termed "McMindfulness"—and advocates for a deeper, more integrated approach. This deeper mindfulness involves not just personal well-being, but also the ethical and collective dimensions of leadership, encouraging leaders to act with a broader sense of responsibility and purpose.

3. MetaMindfulness as a Leadership Meta-Skill:
MetaMindfulness, as described in the paper, transcends traditional mindfulness practices by integrating both individual and collective wisdom. It encourages leaders to be reflective not only about their own goals and actions but also about the broader impact of their decisions on their organisations and society. This reflective capacity is crucial for making ethical decisions in complex, high-stakes environments.

4. Developing Resilience and Adaptability:
In VUCA environments, resilience and adaptability are key. MetaMindfulness helps leaders develop these qualities by promoting an attitude of openness, curiosity, and flexibility. Leaders who practise it are better equipped to handle stress, recover from setbacks, and lead their teams through periods of rapid change.

Key Insights for Leadership in a VUCA World cont.

5. Building Collective Mindfulness:

Leadership in uncertainty is not just an individual endeavour; it requires fostering a culture of mindfulness within the organisation. Collective mindfulness involves creating an environment where teams are vigilant, responsive, and engaged in continuous learning. This collective approach helps organisations to detect and respond to weak signals of potential crises, thus enhancing overall organisational resilience.

6. Ethical and Sustainable Leadership:

The paper highlights the importance of aligning leadership practices with ethical principles and long-term sustainability. MetaMindfulness encourages leaders to go beyond short-term gains and consider the broader social, environmental, and economic impacts of their decisions. This holistic approach to leadership is essential for fostering trust, credibility, and long-term success.

These insights underscore the transformative potential of MetaMindfulness in leadership development. By embracing a deeper, more comprehensive approach to decision-making, leaders can navigate the challenges of a VUCA world with greater effectiveness, resilience, and ethical integrity.

If you'd like to further develop these skills in yourself or your team, see the detailed framework below or reach out to discuss; we would be delighted to support.

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