6

Developing Learning Agile Behavior

A Model and Overview

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I am not afraid of storms for I am learning how to sail my ship.
—Louisa May Alcott (1832–1888), American author and activist

Over the past two decades organizational researchers and practitioners have paid increasing attention to identification of leaders who demonstrate learning agility (De Meuse, 2017; Lombardo & Eichinger, 2000, 2011; Silzer & Church, 2009). Discussions of learning agility sometimes imply that it is something binary—you either have it or you don't. While much research is still needed, undoubtedly there are individual differences that predispose a leader to be more or less learning agile, including, for example, personality characteristics such as openness to experience (Laxso, 2018), a growth mindset (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), or cognitive ability (DeRue, Ashford, & Myers, 2012).

However, we cannot lose sight of the *learnable* behaviors and organizational practices that enhance learning agility and accelerate learning. Just as a race car may have maximum horsepower and the best aerodynamics, the conditions of the track and the strategies deployed by the driver to adjust to them are also necessary for achieving maximum velocity. While identification and selection are certainly critical, it is equally important to consider processes that *develop* learning agility both for those who are and are not naturally predisposed to be agile learners. It is these learnable behaviors that are the focus of this chapter.

It is unrealistic for organizations to expect that leaders across all functions and business units will be inherently learning agile. Assuming that learning agility follows a normal distribution, by definition, only half of leaders have

above average learning agility, and just 16% of leaders could be described as highly learning agile. Focusing solely on leaders who are already learning agile severely restricts an organization's leadership pipeline. In the face of unprecedented change, leaders—and organizations—able to develop learning agility will have a significant advantage.

For leaders who are more naturally predisposed to be learning agile the development of Learning Agile Behaviors™ will allow them to take full advantage of these individual differences. As is the case with most natural gifts, a predisposition to be learning agile may be amplified through appropriate nurturing and practice. For example, research on constructs related to learning, such as growth mindset, goal orientation (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), and regulatory focus (Higgins, 1998), has shown that while individuals are inclined to behave consistently with their natural orientations, environmental factors and deliberate practice can impact mindsets and behavior. By extension, those organizations that assist leaders in developing their learning agility will have a competitive advantage keeping pace with rapidly changing business conditions. Knowing how to develop these important behaviors also creates a much more level playing field and can empower *all* leaders to become more learning agile.

Given the importance of understanding how learning agility can be developed, this chapter (a) defines what it means to *develop* behaviors that can enhance or supplement one's existing learning agility; (b) summarizes theories and models relevant to the development of learning agility; (c) presents a heuristic, integrated model of Learning Agile Behavior; and (d) provides an overview and practical examples of how behaviors that increase learning agility can be developed.

What Does It Mean to Develop Learning Agility?

There is much practical value in understanding the mechanisms that allow leaders to learn from experience quickly and efficiently. Becoming learning agile requires the development of behaviors associated with the ability to learn, adapt, and do both of these in a rapid and nimble manner within the crucible of dynamic leadership situations. In addition to learning from past experiences, keeping up with change will require forecasting and proactively

developing the capabilities needed for the future. To guide our discussion, we propose the following definition:

Learning Agile Behaviors are the self-regulated behaviors, strategies, and habits that enable learning at an accelerated pace, facilitate more agile adaptation to dynamic conditions, and result in more effective leadership.

Learning Agile Behavior: Foundational Theories and Research

In developing a model of Learning Agile Behavior, it is important to build on theory and research on constructs both directly and indirectly related to learning agility, such as ability to learn, performance adaptation, and learning velocity. (a) *Learning ability*, while sometimes equated with general intelligence, also includes possessing knowledge and skill in applying different learning techniques and strategies. (b) *Adaptive performance* includes situation appraisal, strategy selection, self-regulation, and learning (Baard, Rench, & Kozlowski, 2014). (c) *Learning velocity*, the temporal dimension of learning, is also key given that learning agility requires being nimble in responding to changing conditions, quickly letting go of ingrained habits and picking up new ones (De Meuse, 2017; DeRue, Ashford, et al., 2012; Harvey, 2018). The theories and research listed in Table 6.1 were all considered when creating a model of Learning Agile Behavior.

These theories and historical research suggest a number of factors relevant to understanding Learning Agile Behavior. Describing each of these theories in detail is beyond the scope of this chapter; therefore, the key tenets of these theories are summarized in Box 6.1.

A Model of Learning Agile Behaviors for Leaders

Given the importance of developing learning agile leaders, a model integrating these diverse perspectives will be useful for both research and practice. In this section, we propose a heuristic model incorporating the learnable behaviors that contribute to learning agility. It is our hope it will provide a framework for furthering our understanding of Learning Agile Behaviors.

Table 6.1 Influential Theories From Literature Relevant to Developing Learning Agility

• Adult Learning Theory	Knowles, 1973, 1975
• Theory of Action and Double Loop Learning	Argyris, 1977, 1991; Argyris & Schon, 1974
• Social Learning Theory	Bandura, 1977
• Experiential Learning Theory	A. Kolb & Kolb, 2011; D. A. Kolb, 1984
• The Lessons of Experience	Center for Creative Leadership; Lombardo & Eichinger, 2011; McCall et al., 1988
• Growth Mindset	Dweck, 2008; Dweck & Leggett, 1988
• Transformative Learning Theory	Mezirow, 1991, 2000
• Constructive–Developmental Theory	Kegan, 1994; Kegan & Lahey, 2001, 2009
• Adaptive Performance and Adaptive Learning System	Bell & Kozlowski, 2010; Pulakos, Arad, Donovan, & Plamondon, 2000
• I-ADAPT Theory	Ployhart & Bliese, 2006
• The Construct of Learning Agility	De Meuse, 2017, 2019; De Meuse, Dai, & Hallenbeck, 2010

Agile Learning Process

Building on these influential theories and research, along with our own experiences assessing and coaching hundreds of leaders, a model is proposed based on the assumption that learning is an *ongoing process of personal change and adaptation*. We refer to it as the *Agile Learning Process*™. This process includes the following stages:

- *Identify Need for Change*—Detect internal and external indicators that signal a need for learning and the time and pace required for this adaptation.
- *Plan for Change*—Understand the set of Learning Agile Behaviors that will accelerate the learning process and identify the behaviors within this set most relevant within the context of dynamic leadership situations. Develop a learning plan, including clear goals, tactics, resources required and obstacle mitigation.
- *Implement Change*—Demonstrate mastery in implementing learning behaviors at the appropriate time and in the appropriate sequence,

Box 6.1 Factors That Influence the Development of Learning Agility

- Agile learning requires awareness of both internal and external experiences and interpretation of these experiences.
- Experiential learning can occur both directly through stretch experiences and vicariously through observation, media, dialogue, and storytelling.
- Increased self- or environmental awareness, crisis, or significant transitions can trigger learning by creating dissonance and discomfort.
- Critical reflection is essential to the process of converting concrete experience to abstract lessons that can be applied to future experiences.
- Learning requires breaking down self-defense mechanisms and openness to alternative views and approaches.
- Sustainable change requires self-insight, which may include uncovering unconscious assumptions, beliefs and values.
- Learning may be facilitated by guided discovery, dialogue, and various forms of "processing" with others to create self-awareness, trigger metacognition, or identify new frameworks.
- Self-regulatory processes such as resilience may be influenced by framing learning around mastery rather than performance goals and developing new ways of thinking about mistakes and failures.
- Being able to interact effectively with others facilitates learning from, with, and through others.
- Metacognition and the ability to "think about how we think" allows us to change our interpretation of the environment and our mental models.
- Appraisal of the situation and selection of the most effective learning strategy may contribute to adapting more quickly.
- Curiosity, openness to new experiences, and a willingness to take risks and try new approaches support learning agility.

resulting in learning at the velocity required given the rate of change in the environment.

- *Regulate and Monitor Change*—Regulate effort, discipline, and resilience in pursuing and modifying learning plans. Engage in monitoring of overall learning speed and effectiveness.

Based on a review of the literature and our experience working with organizational leaders across industries and contexts, we believe that increasing the quality and velocity of the Agile Learning Process will, in turn, increase a leader's ability to rapidly adapt to dynamic conditions. However, more empirical research is needed to support this assertion.

Learning Agile Behaviors

In addition, significant research exists to suggest the Agile Learning Process can be enabled or impeded by a wide range of behaviors, strategies, and habits. These are referred to here as *Learning Agile Behaviors* and have been grouped into the following five categories:

1. *Observing*: Includes mindful awareness of both internal and external experience as well as the ability to scan and forecast future conditions.
2. *Doing:* Involves demonstrating personal agency and internal locus of control by taking action on the environment, seeking new experiences, experimenting with new ways of responding, and actively seeking new information and frameworks.
3. *Connecting*: Focuses on connecting with and learning from others vicariously and directly by asking for help and feedback, learning with and from peers, mentors, role models, and coaches.
4. *Thinking:* Strategies that involve cognitively processing information, which include reflection, metacognition, questioning, and mindset shifting.
5. *Mobilizing:* Includes behaviors involved in harnessing emotions and motivation, such as self-control, goal setting, planning, demonstrating discipline, and developing resilience.

The proposed model is summarized in Figure 6.1.

In summary, understanding both the Agile Learning *Process* and Learning Agile *Behaviors*—the "building blocks" of agile learning—is important for
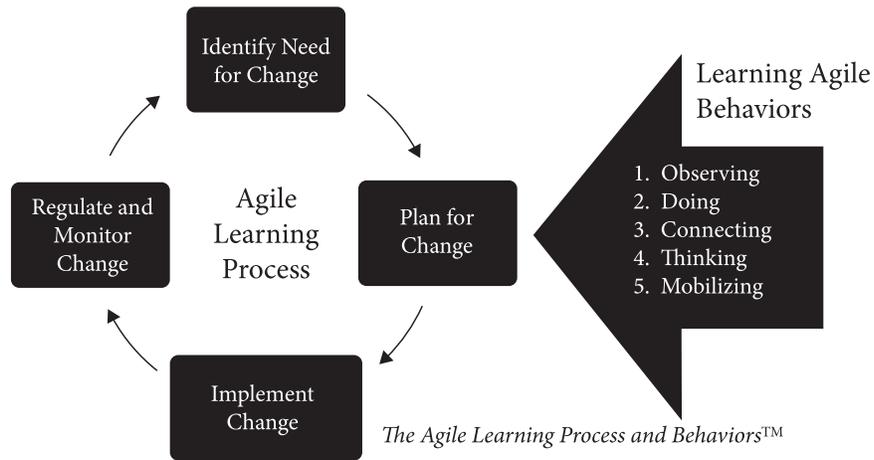
Figure 6.1 depicts a circular diagram labeled "Agile Learning Process" with five boxes connected by arrows: Identify Need for Change, Plan for Change, Implement Change, Regulate and Monitor Change, forming a cycle. A large arrow labeled "Learning Agile Behaviors" points toward the cycle listing: 1. Observing, 2. Doing, 3. Connecting, 4. Thinking, 5. Mobilizing. Below the diagram is the text "*The Agile Learning Process and Behaviors*™".

Figure 6.1 Model of agile learning process and behaviors.

developing learning agility. The proposed model assumes that mastery of the Learning Agile Behaviors and understanding when to deploy them will accelerate learning speed, flexibility, and overall effectiveness. The remainder of this chapter focuses on describing each of the Learning Agile Behaviors in greater detail, exploring how they contribute to learning agility and providing practical suggestions for how they can be developed.

An Overview of Learning Agile Behaviors and How They Can Be Developed

For each set of Learning Agile Behaviors, we briefly (a) define and describe the behaviors; (b) summarize key research supporting the importance of the behaviors in enhancing learning agility; and (c) discuss practical implications of how leaders can develop and implement these learning behaviors. The reader is also directed to Case Study F for an example of how development of Learning Agile Behavior was experienced by an early career leader.

1. Observing

Observing includes mindful awareness of both internal and external experiences as well as the ability to scan and forecast future conditions. Being skilled in observation allows leaders to accurately assess reality and potentially better predict the capabilities required for future success. Within the

Learning Agile Process, observing is especially important for detection of factors that signal a need for learning, and regulation of emotions, thoughts, and automatic behaviors that help or hinder the pace of learning.

Mindful Awareness

Our brains are naturally wired to create shortcuts so that many of our behaviors become "automatic." Automaticity frees our limited attentional capacity and (a) increases speed and efficiency; (b) allows parallel processing; and (c) reduces effort (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). The challenge for leaders is to be intentional regarding when to rely on internal autopilot and when to take conscious control. Leaders can be more agile in their learning if they understand how to recognize and reduce automaticity when it chains them to habitual ways of thinking and behaving that are not productive.

Mindfulness is defined as the purposeful awareness and acceptance of present moment experiences, including internal (thoughts, bodily sensations) and external (physical and social environment) stimuli with an attitude of curiosity rather than judgment, minimizing automatic filters. Mindfulness is relevant to learning agility for the reasons summarized in Box 6.2.

Environmental Scanning and Future Forecasting

Scanning the environment and forecasting future events is typically associated with strategic planning at the organizational level. However, these learnable behaviors are also relevant to learning agility. Environmental scanning is the process of (a) detecting internal and external changes that are already underway; (b) attending to signals about potential changes; (c) using this information to identify threats and opportunities; and (d) determining a future direction (Le Pine, Colquitt, & Erez, 2000; Ployhart & Bliese, 2006). In the context of Learning Agile Behavior, this includes the ability to translate this information into a prediction of where and when different capabilities will be required for the future.

Environmental scanning is particularly important in uncertain and ambiguous environments and those where innovation is required. Given that leaders' work is constantly in flux, the skills required for success at a particular time or within a given context are also continuously changing. To respond with agility requires that leaders anticipate their learning needs and proactively take action to develop the new capabilities needed for the future and forecast the time required to develop them.

Box 6.2 Contributions of Mindfulness to Learning Agility

- **Increasing readiness for change** by surfacing implicit beliefs and altering allocation and stability of attention (e.g., Gondo, Patterson, & Palacios, 2013).
- **Disrupting automaticity and increasing cognitive flexibility** (e.g., Glomb, Duffy, Bono, & Yang, 2000).
- **Vigilance in scanning the environment** for both threats and opportunities given the volume of information leaders are regularly bombarded with (e.g., Shapiro, 2009).
- **Developing curiosity and openness to experience** (e.g., Good et al., 2016).
- **Increasing receptivity to feedback** (e.g., Lee, 2012).
- **Regulating emotions, behavior, and resilience** (e.g., Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013).

Practical Suggestions for Developing Learning Agile Behaviors: Observing

Increase Awareness of Personal Inclination for Mindfulness

Several assessments of mindfulness exist, such as the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (K. W. Brown & Ryan, 2003); the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (Cortazar, Calvete, Fernández-González, & Orue, 2019); and the Langer Mindfulness Scale (Pirson, Langer, Bodner, & Zilcha-Mano, 2012). While not designed specifically for leaders, these instruments may be useful for increasing a leader's overall awareness of his or her level of mindfulness. In addition, one of the seven facets measured by the *TALENTx7*—an assessment specific to learning agility and leaders—is "environmental mindfulness" (see Chapter 4).

Engage in Meditative Mindfulness Practice

Research provides support that relevant training can increase mindfulness (Quaglia, Braun, Freeman, McDaniel, & Brown, 2016). An increasing number of organizations, such as Aetna, Google, and LinkedIn, offer

mindfulness training in the workplace. In addition, technology has added more options through apps and tools such as Headspace and Calm. Readers are also directed to Yeganeh and Kolb (2009) for a practical set of mindful experiential learning practices. Given the wealth of resources, the challenge is knowing what type of training and practice will yield the desired results for particular leaders.

Monitor Internal and External Conditions for Changes That Translate to New Leadership Requirements

Many of the same techniques used in strategic planning can be deployed by leaders to identify learning needs, including regularly reviewing key business/industry publications, learning about industry changes from a network of contacts, and subscribing to important newsfeeds both internal and external to the organization. Translating these changes into leadership skill requirements is often relegated to the talent management function. However, leaders themselves can learn to analyze situations and determine the leadership capabilities required.

Regularly Seek Self-Assessment Information

Just as organizations conduct SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analyses, leaders also can learn to evaluate themselves using this framework. To do so effectively requires that leaders regularly seek informal feedback. Leaders can also increase self-awareness by taking advantage of formal feedback resources that are available to them, such as personality and learning agility assessments, 360 surveys, and behavioral simulations.

Prioritize the Leadership Capabilities to Be Learned and Let Go

Leaders who are learning agile must select the critical capabilities to be learned, and in some cases "unlearned" or used with less frequency. As leaders make each turn in the leadership pipeline, they must recognize that behaviors that led to success in the past may no longer be needed and could even be detrimental in new situations (Charan, Drotter, & Noel, 2001; De Meuse, 2017; Goldsmith & Reiter, 2007).

2. Doing

Doing involves taking action by proactively seeking new information, frameworks, and experiences; experimenting with new ways of responding; and practicing deliberately. These behaviors are central to the implementation stage of the Agile Learning Process.

Seeking Stretch Experiences

In *The Lessons of Experience*, McCall, Lombardo, and Morrison (1988) found that successful executives considered challenging job experiences to be the most critical driver of their development. The assumption is that learning occurs when there is a discrepancy between the leader's current skill set, past experiences, and the skills required to do the job. The leader must "stretch" to learn and try new behaviors or reframe previous ways of thinking in a new situation (McCauley, Ruderman, Ohlott, & Morrow, 1994). This gap in capability compared to role requirements can motivate leaders to be agile in learning what is needed, either to achieve a significant reward outcome or to avoid a negative outcome. Learning is accelerated when leaders feel compelled to employ tactics outside of their normal comfort zone and, as a result, acquire new skills and strategies.

Experimenting, Taking Risks, and Demonstrating Courage

Experimenting involves trying out different behaviors and strategies. Through testing new approaches, leaders are able to evaluate the effectiveness of various behaviors, develop new mental models, and get feedback on what worked and what should be done differently. This iterative process enables learning agility by increasing flexibility in readily drawing connections within and across experiences.

Experimenting with new behaviors inevitably requires taking risks and stepping to the very edge of one's comfort zone. Courage, "the intentional pursuit of a worthy goal despite the perception of personal threat and uncertain outcome" (Pury, 2008, p. 111), is a learnable behavior that facilitates the experimentation needed to try out new behaviors (e.g., Woodard & Pury, 2007). Multiple researchers have also emphasized the role of psychological

safety in learning (e.g., Edmondson, 2019). In developing learning agility, we must help leaders develop the skills needed to overcome fears, take prudent risks, and create their *own* conditions of safety.

Sourcing Information and New Frameworks

New experiences require a leader to do things that he or she has never done before. Rather than simply trying out new behaviors in a trial–and-error fashion, systematically seeking new information can provide frameworks that empower leaders to be more targeted in their experimentation. Information sourcing behaviors include intentional actions taken to locate and access others' expertise, experiences, insights, and opinions. People use a variety of methods to access information; these are categorized in Table 6.2. Learning from experience can be accelerated by understanding the information sources available and the types of learning they best facilitate.

Practicing Deliberately

Deliberate practice involves practicing in an intentional and focused way, breaking down a skill into steps, attending to performance of those steps, and eventually reintegrating the steps into a new behavior pattern. Research on deliberate practice has shown it to be effective for developing expertise in a variety of domains. However, while the cliché "practice makes perfect" seems logical, repeatedly practicing a leadership behavior that is ineffective or no longer appropriate to the situation is a hallmark of leadership derailment. Deliberate practice may increase agility in changing from an ingrained behavioral pattern to a new, more productive approach and for developing the automaticity needed for routine leadership capabilities (Day, 2010).

Table 6.2 Information Sourcing Strategies

Strategy	Most Helpful for Learning
1. Dyadic: communicating directly with a single other expert	• Behaviors associated with adapting to the environment
2. Published knowledge: sourcing information through books, media, Internet, sources that are widely available	• Behaviors that reflect successful behavior of others, best practices, and commonly used steps for recurring problems
3. Group knowledge: intentional effort to locate and access others' expertise, experience, and insights and engage in public conversation	• Novel solutions to problems and radically different work practices and gaining a wider range of experiences and perspectives

Adapted from Gray, P. H., & Meister, D. B. (2006). Knowledge sourcing methods. *Information & Management, 43*(2), 142–156.

Practical Suggestions for Developing Learning Agile Behaviors: Doing

Identify the Right Stretch Opportunities and Explore How Assignments Are Made

Leaders can increase their learning agility by actively and intentionally seeking opportunities that will yield the greatest developmental returns. Some leading organizations (e.g., PepsiCo, Hershey, Kelly Services, IBM) hold detailed talent planning meetings to chart critical experiences for their leaders, pairing them with assignments that align with their existing skills and experiences, as well as those skills that can be developed through particular assignments. However, stretch assignments must be carefully designed to avoid negative consequences to both the leader and his or her organization. Nevertheless, all stakeholders should keep in mind that some failures are to be expected. In addition, it is important for both leaders and their organizations to avoid focusing solely on task achievement and place adequate emphasis on learning.

Engage in Action Learning Projects

Action learning is a process by which a community of learners works together on a real work problem, with the dual purpose of contributing to the business and learning (e.g., Marquardt & Banks, 2010). Learning occurs through

concrete experiences, active questioning, and reflection. Action learning creates a safe environment for people to practice their leadership skills, obtain real-time feedback, and enhance the transfer of leadership skills to the job.

Apply Design Thinking

Even though design thinking was developed as an innovation process, it is highly relevant to helping leaders become more agile in experimentation. Design thinking is an iterative process in which the focus is on understanding stakeholders, challenging assumptions, redefining problems, and iteratively experimenting with solutions (T. Brown, 2008). It is considered most useful in addressing problems that are ill-defined, which is what leaders commonly face. A hallmark of the process is learning to "fail fast," which refers to experimenting quickly, seeking feedback, and embracing failure as a means of learning. For example, Johnson & Johnson encourages design thinking to support both innovation and learning agility (Cohen, 2019). As a result, the company has found participants have less fear of taking risks and understand that experimentation and iteration are key enablers of learning agility.

Bring Underlying Fears to the Surface, Calculate Risks, and Build Self-Efficacy

It can be helpful to surface the underlying fears that prevent leaders from stretching out of their normal comfort zone, allowing them to learn from experience. Articles, books, and TED Talks by authors such as Margie Warrell (*Find Your Courage*, 2009) and Brené Brown (*Daring Greatly*, 2012) can help leaders understand their fears, accept their vulnerabilities, and understand steps that will be helpful. Focusing on past successes and signs of success in the current situation can support self-efficacy. Gaining clarity about expectations and developing an action plan can also increase self-efficacy by creating a perceived pathway to success (Snyder, 2002).

The risks of experimentation can often seem greater than they really are, especially for high-achieving leaders who have rarely, if ever, failed. Pury (2008) noted that courage can be developed by learning cognitive techniques that reduce leaders' bias to have heightened sensitivity to risks. For example, reflecting on or talking with others about (a) how likely a feared outcome is and (b) how catastrophic it would be if the feared outcome occurred can result in a more realistic assessment of risk. In a *Harvard Business Review* article, Kathleen Reardon (2007) offered a practical "courage calculation" that includes

questions such as, (a) What are my goals? (b) How important are they? (c) Do I have a supportive power network? (d) What are the risk/benefit trade-offs? (e) Is now the right time to act? and (f) Do I have a sufficient contingency plan?

Identify Appropriate Opportunities for Deliberate Practice

Leaders should consider which capabilities will benefit from repeated and deliberate practice (e.g., public speaking, facilitating meetings, conducting interviews). When planning their work, it is then possible to identify situations where deliberate practice will be possible. As previously noted, seeking real-time feedback from a trusted advisor and taking time to reflect on what to "start, stop, or continue" will likely result in the most benefit from deliberate practice.

The opportunity to practice leadership skills in a simulated environment is a safe way to learn from experience and to engage in situations that may not yet have been encountered or encountered with sufficient frequency to practice. Simulations can be technology enabled or high touch, involving interactions with skilled coaches or assessors. Simulations are a powerful way to develop learning agility by providing a microcosm of the experiential learning cycle, including preparation, practice, feedback, and reflection. (See Case Studies B and F for examples.)

3. Connecting

Learning rarely occurs in isolation from others and is often the outcome of interacting with peers, managers, direct reports, clients, customers, and other stakeholders. McCall and colleagues (1988) noted that a significant percentage of key learning events involved a specific person versus an assignment. Leaders can learn from others both vicariously and directly by observing role models, asking for help, seeking feedback, and learning with and from peers, mentors, role models, and coaches. Connecting with others is important across all stages of the Learning Agile Process.

Asking for Help

No one leader can possess all of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and capacity needed to achieve organizational goals. Proactively seeking help from peers, managers, or coaches can facilitate agile learning when leaders identify gaps in

their knowledge or encounter problems. Initiating a request for help inherently involves some psychological risk, including perceived shame, embarrassment, and dependence. While it may seem intuitive for a leader to simply ask for help, it does not always happen! The development of Learning Agile Behavior may also be influenced by cultural and individual differences in the perceived risk of asking for help. For example, research suggested individuals from non-Western cultures, men, and those who are lower in achievement motivation and higher in self-esteem may be more likely to avoid seeking help (Lee, 2002; Tessler & Schwartz, 1972).

Seeking, Accepting, and Using Feedback

Feedback is essential to agile learning. Feedback helps leaders develop more accurate self-perceptions, clearly define expectations, gauge progress, and correct errors (e.g., Ashford, Blatt, & VandeWalle, 2003). Often, feedback is the only "mirror" available to leaders to help make course corrections when learning from experience. Feedback seeking is even more important for leaders compared to individual contributors because the amount of spontaneous feedback received from others becomes less frequent, skills are more complex, and success is not always self-evident. However, the decision to ask for feedback is influenced by whether the benefits of asking for feedback (e.g., reduced uncertainty) are perceived as greater than the costs (e.g., portraying oneself as uncertain or incompetent).

Becoming learning agile requires getting comfortable with actively seeking candid feedback, avoiding defensiveness, and asking specific, detailed questions from multiple sources. To result in learning, feedback must be accepted and integrated into existing belief and knowledge structures. Several studies have suggested that learning is especially strong when reflection is paired with feedback seeking, followed by action on the learned insights (Anseel, Lievens, & Schollaert, 2009).

Learning Vicariously From Role Models

It is well established that learning can occur vicariously through observation of role models to determine appropriate or effective behavior. We all learn from role models, whether consciously or not. Leaders can learn what to do

and not do from both positive and negative role models, from direct experience with others as well as passive observation of media images (Kempster & Parry, 2014). Because of the practical limitations on how much direct experience any one leader can obtain, those who are learning agile are intentional about learning from role models. Leaders can round out their experience portfolio more quickly by proactively seeking vicarious experiences. As McCall et al. (1988) noted, "The lessons from other people are there for the taking, but more often than not, a person must go after them" (p. 73).

Leveraging Coaches and Mentors

The prevalence of using coaches and mentors has increased dramatically during the past decade (Frick, 2018). It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss what contributes to effective coaching or mentoring overall. However, most relevant to the development of learning agility is helping leaders know how to maximize their mentoring and/or coaching experiences. Participants are rarely clear on what to expect or how to "use" a coach or mentor. Some leaders enter coaching with fear, others may be defensive, and others assume that a coach or mentor will have all the "magic answers."

Learning agile leaders recognize that working with a coach or mentor is a two-way process and deploy actions to help them get the most from these interactions. Unfortunately, limited research exists on what does and does not work. An Amazon search resulted in over 4,000 books on how to *do* effective coaching but none on how to *receive* leadership coaching.

Practical Suggestions for Developing Learning Agile Behaviors: Connecting

Overcome the Psychological Barriers Associated With Asking for Help

A first step for leaders is to recognize the feelings of vulnerability associated with asking for help and focus on the rewards rather than the risks. Leaders can learn to (a) frame requests in ways that demonstrate asking for help as a strength and a willingness to learn; (b) remember that people are typically flattered to be asked to share their expertise; and (c) be realistic and specific in their requests for help (e.g., "I'm only looking for an hour of your time to

learn how you handled this type of situation."). Learning to consistently express gratitude for the help received and describing the impact the help will have on self and others is also a learnable technique that increases the odds of receiving support.

Mindfully Observe and Reflect on the Behavior of Role Models

By being more mindful in their observation process, leaders can more deeply tune into (a) the nuances of the behavior being demonstrated; (b) the unique context; and (c) the outcomes that result from the role model's behavior. Just as reflection supports learning from direct experience, taking the time to reflect on observed experience can help in abstracting key lessons.

Seek Exposure to a Broad Range of Leaders

Relational proximity plays an important role in who we learn from, which can limit available leadership role models. Actively seeking opportunities to observe a broad range of role models increases exposure to different ways leadership behaviors are demonstrated. This allows leaders to pick and choose those most relevant to their own development and authentic to their personal style. It may be especially important for women and other groups who are underrepresented in the leadership ranks to seek additional role models similar to them, given that comparisons with others who share commonalities can be especially potent (Sealy & Singh, 2010).

Given accessibility to a wealth of media, leaders also have the opportunity to learn from the experiences of other leaders by reading biographies or watching videos, movies, and other media. For example, Accenture has supported leaders in learning from the experiences of others by capturing and digitally disseminating vignettes/stories that leaders are willing to share (C. Mirshokrai, Accenture, managing director of Global Leadership Development, phone interview, May 6, 2014).

Use Targeted Questions When Seeking Feedback

Seeking feedback by asking general questions like, "How did I do?" typically results in equally generic responses (e.g., "You did great"), especially when the feedback provider is not experienced or comfortable giving feedback. Leaders can learn to gain more useful feedback by asking more targeted

questions, such as (a) What could I have done differently? (b) What did you think the impact was of [specific behavior] in that last meeting? (c) What do you think would happen if I tried [specific behavior]? or (d) How could I have done [specific behavior] even better?

Seek Feedback Often and From Multiple Perspectives

Feedback should not be a one-time process. Following up with feedback providers regularly enables leaders to track progress and identify further areas to refine, as long as it is not so frequent as to frustrate others! Seeking feedback from a variety of stakeholders ensures the leader gets a more complete and accurate picture of how new behaviors are working. Multisource surveys can help in obtaining robust and comprehensive feedback from multiple providers. However, it should not be an excuse for failing to seek feedback through the regular course of work. By demonstrating gratitude for feedback, leaders can subtly "train" those around them to be more comfortable providing it and help create a feedback-rich culture within their team and organization.

Seek a Coach With Expertise in Learning Agility

Seek out a coach who understands learning agility and can help in developing Learning Agile Behaviors. Coaches can certainly provide short-term help for developing a specific skill set, but their value will be even greater when they are able to simultaneously assist in developing a leader's learning agility for the long term. A coach versed in learning agility will help leaders understand the behaviors most helpful at certain stages in the Learning Agile Process and encourage the Learning Agile Behaviors described in this chapter.

Maximize Coaching or Mentoring Interactions

Informal surveys of coaches, nonempirical articles, and our own experience suggest several learnable steps that leaders can take to get the most from coaching and mentoring opportunities. Most important, leaders can participate in the coaching process with an open, growth-oriented mindset; share areas of vulnerability; and recognize that strong emotional reactions can be an important signal. Leaders can also be active in the process by (a) preparing for sessions (e.g., reflecting on progress, making notes on feedback

received, considering examples of experiences to share, preparing a list of potential topics and questions); (b) taking responsibility for reflecting after discussions, owning what is within their control, following through on commitments; and (c) letting the coach know their personal needs. Last, realistic expectations about the process and tenacity are key. Change takes time and can often be uncomfortable!

Look for Micro-Mentors

A single mentor rarely has both depth and breadth across all the possible areas in which leaders must be skilled. "Micromentoring"—soliciting the help of known experts for shorter term interactions (e.g., coffee, lunch, or a phone call), focused on targeted subjects—is a useful alternative. In addition to the direct rewards, micromentoring often has the benefit of expanding a leader's network and exposing the leader to a variety of leadership role models.

4. Thinking

Until now, our discussion has primarily focused on *observable* behaviors leaders can develop to enhance learning agility. However, we cannot overlook the critical importance of *thinking*, the largely unseen cognitive aspect of actively processing and integrating information. Learnable thinking behaviors include reflection, metacognition, questioning, and mindset shifting. These behaviors are important in virtually all stages of the Learning Agile Process.

Reflecting

All leaders try to understand their experiences through their existing assumptions and frames of reference, which in turn shapes thoughts and feelings. Experiences serve as the catalyst, but it is critical reflection that cements learning and behavioral change. Learning how and when to reflect and then doing it consistently is an important learnable process that contributes significantly to agile learning.

Reflection involves integrating new information gained from experience, feedback, information seeking, and coaching in a meaningful manner—in

short, "sense-making." Daudelin (1996) suggested that reflection includes the phases of (a) thinking about events, people, and actions as objectively as possible; (b) analyzing why things happened as they did; (c) developing hypotheses about how the event could have been handled differently; and (d) identifying insights for action. Multiple studies have demonstrated the value of reflection (e.g., Anseel et al., 2009; DeRue, Nahrgang, Hollenbeck, & Workman, 2012).

Engaging in Metacognition

While reflection involves thinking about our experiences, metacognition is the process of "thinking about our thinking" regarding those experiences. Developing the ability to actively monitor our cognitions is critical to becoming learning agile. Metacognition impacts self-regulation, seeking assistance, critical thinking, problem-solving, and reflection. It is a powerful overall predictor of learning (e.g., Bransford, Sherwood, Vye, & Rieser, 1986; Lai, 2011).

Research suggests that metacognitive skills *can* be learned (e.g., Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). For example, the central premise of transformative learning theory is that learning requires metacognition and making changes to previously unquestioned frames of reference in order to integrate new experiences into one's worldview (Mezirow, 1991, 1997). Similarly, Argyris (1977, 1991) suggests that double-loop learning occurs when leaders uncover and change their underlying assumptions and mental models.

Questioning and Demonstrating Curiosity

Learning to ask effective questions is a potent Learning Agile Behavior in addition to being a powerful leadership skill. Questioning is the learnable behavior associated with curiosity. Questions can be internal (aiding in reflection and metacognition) or external (resulting in more meaningful dialogue with others). Marquardt (2011) suggested, "The capacity to ask fresh questions in conditions of ignorance, risk and confusion when nobody knows what to do next is at the heart of action learning" (Marquardt, 2011, p. 71). Questions can sometimes provide answers, but more importantly, they stimulate deeper thinking.

Learning from experience typically requires that leaders engage in solving complex problems where existing knowledge is often insufficient. By beginning with questions, a leader can determine if his or her existing knowledge is adequate and relevant. Being agile in questioning skills allows a leader to more quickly unpeel the layers of a situation, gather information, gain input from others, and explore new strategies. Questions direct attention, energy, and effort and have even been called "the ultimate empowerment tool for leaders" (Oakley & Krug, 1991).

Changing Mental Models

Everyone has mental models or implicit theories of how the world operates. A mental model is a cognitive representation that allows us to make sense of what is going on and act on our environment. Keating and Heslin (2015) defined a mindset as "a mental framework that guides how people think, feel, and act in achievement contexts" (p. 334). Mindsets can be adaptive or maladaptive in influencing leaders' (a) interpretation of situations, (b) self-talk, (c) emotional reactions, and (d) ultimate actions taken. Two mental models especially relevant to the development of learning agility are "growth mindset" and "error management mindset."

Carol Dweck (2008) has emphasized the value of having a growth versus fixed mindset. Those with a "fixed mindset" believe their capabilities are static. They are concerned with performance goals and being judged as competent. This mindset leads to setting goals that are easier, undervaluing the impact of effort, not asking for help, and less resilience when faced with challenges. In contrast, those with a "growth mindset" believe that growth is possible with effort, increasing the likelihood of trying different strategies, taking risks, and asking for help. Challenging goals and setbacks are viewed as opportunities to learn.

Error management is another relevant mindset that involves accepting errors as inevitable and framing failure as a learning opportunity. This mindset prevents negative emotions from consuming attention in a dysfunctional way (e.g., Keith & Frese, 2008). Those with an error management mindset may also be more likely to interpret negative emotions as motivational feedback regarding goal achievement (Frese & Keith, 2015).

While mental models can be difficult to change, the good news is that they *can* be shifted through coaching and other interventions. For example, significant research has demonstrated that cognitive therapy, based on changing underlying beliefs, is one of the most powerful interventions

available for changing problematic emotions and behaviors (Butler, Chapman, Forman, & Beck, 2006). Similarly, mindset shifting may prove to be one of the most potent facilitators of learning agility.

Practical Suggestions for Developing Learning Agile Behaviors: Thinking

Learn to "Think About Thinking"

This may seem daunting, yet it is likely one of the capabilities most critical to the development of learning agility. A practical first step is simply to understand what metacognition is. This basic awareness can help leaders begin to "see" the frameworks that govern how they perceive the world. Another promising avenue is vertical learning (e.g., Petrie, 2015), which incorporates concepts from developmentalism (Kegan & Lahey, 2009), stages of consciousness (Rochat, 2003), and transformational learning (Mezirow, 1991). Vertical learning is about changing the way people view reality and make sense of their experiences. (See Chapter 17 for a more complete review of vertical learning.)

Develop a Reflection Routine

Leaders are typically biased for action, finding it difficult to shift into a reflection mode; they need to remind themselves reflection is value-added time. For many, a critical step is simply being disciplined about establishing a reflection routine, such as making an "appointment with self" on the calendar, consciously using commute time to reflect, or keeping a journal. For some, telling a friend, family member, or colleague about their experience can support reflective processing. Writing and talking appear to be especially beneficial when processing negative events to prevent rumination (Lyubomirsky, Sousa, & Dickerhoof, 2006). Keeping a digital or paper journal has the added benefit of recording the process, which can be a rich source for identifying patterns of thought, behavior, or emotional reactions over time.

Use Questions or Models to Guide Reflection

When leaders first begin a reflection routine, having some thought-provoking questions can be helpful. Table 6.3 provides some examples. Reflection using

Table 6.3 Example Reflection Questions

Reflecting on a Specific Situation	General Reflection
• What did I do well?	• What feedback did I receive during the past week?
• What should I consider doing differently the next time?	• Who should I be seeking additional feedback from?
• How might my perceptions be similar to or different from others who were involved?	• Are there any consistent themes in the feedback I have received?
• What were the assumptions that I made in choosing how to respond? What evidence do I have to support them?	• How have I done in staying focused on my key priorities? What helped or hindered me in doing so?
• What beliefs underlie the assumptions that I'm making, and could they be faulty?	• How am I progressing on my key development opportunities? Where did I do well or not so well?
• What are the filters or biases that may be influencing my interpretation of this situation?	• What information sources or other people could be resources?

models such as the "ladder of inference" can also be helpful in uncovering belief systems that are maladaptive but are being used without the leader's full awareness (see Senge, 1990).

Create Graphic Representations of Mental Models

The development of mental models may be necessary to think metacognitively about complex systems. Anecdotal evidence from working with leaders suggests that creating diagrams or storyboards of their mental models related to leadership concepts (e.g., teamwork) facilitates deeper questioning of underlying beliefs, assumptions, and how the pieces fit together. Leaders often find that creating a visual diagram to teach others about a topic compels them to clarify their own mental model.

Monitor Self-Talk

Through reflection and metacognition, leaders can monitor and intentionally focus on shifting toward a more growth-oriented mindset. For example, after reflecting on an experience perceived as a setback, leaders should monitor their self-talk for messages such as, "I'm just not smart enough", and

intentionally replacing them with more productive messages, such as, "What strategy might work better the next time?" or "Who might be able to help me figure out a new approach?" Mindfulness may be useful for viewing the situation with curiosity rather than judgment. Initially, it may be helpful for a coach or trusted advisor to provide assistance in identifying maladaptive self-talk.

Seek Training on Growth and/or Error Management Mindsets

Leadership programs are beginning to promote the importance of having a growth mindset. For examples, see Cases B and D. While there is very little research specific to leaders, error management training is another promising approach for shifting mindsets, particularly given it has been shown to increase transfer of learning from one experience to different or novel experiences (Keith & Frese, 2008).

Focus on Asking Questions With a Learning Mindset

"Questioning our questions" is another form of metacognition. Asking questions focused on possibilities rather than on judgments is more conducive to learning agility. For example, What am I responsible for? or What can I learn? (learning mindset) versus Who is to blame? or How could I lose? (judging mindset). Michael Marquardt's book, *Leading With Questions* (2005), is useful for learning how to frame questions. Programs such as QuestionThinking and The Inquiring Mindset™ by Marilee Adams from the Inquiry Institute may also be useful (see also Adams, 2010). Action learning programs and appreciative inquiry are also vehicles for developing questioning skills useful to learning.

5. Mobilizing

Mobilizing behaviors are essential to the planning, regulating, and monitoring stages of the Learning Agile Process. These stages require harnessing emotions and motivation, self-control, setting goals, planning, and demonstrating discipline. Sustaining learning agility for the long term requires resilience and the ability to bounce back from challenges and even failure.

Setting Goals and Establishing Indicators of Success

Goal setting has been widely researched and is considered central in self-regulating processes (e.g., Locke & Latham, 1990). Agile learning is best supported by setting goals that are challenging and attainable but allow for iterative modifications during the learning process. Setting overly specific goals in environments that are complex or changing can inhibit learning by narrowing one's focus and preventing deeper information processing and experimentation (Ordóñez, Schweitzer, Galinsky, & Bazerman, 2009).

It is also essential for leaders not to confuse performance goals, which can lead to a fixed mindset, with learning goals, which encourage a growth mindset. For example, "To have superior influencing skills and be in the top 10% in achieving compliance among stakeholders in implementing key initiatives" is a performance goal. "To increase my understanding of influencing techniques and my capability in persuading key stakeholders to implement key initiatives" is a learning goal. Goals and indicators of success are also important for creating a motivating vision for future state against which progress can be evaluated. Identifying "success indicators" will help leaders recognize the signs to being on the right path and whether additional effort is required (e.g., "I will begin to find that my ideas are more quickly supported by key stakeholders").

Action Planning for Development

Evidence suggests that intentions are translated into action only about 50% of the time, which has been labeled the "intention–behavior gap" (Sheeran & Webb, 2016). Development action plans provide a way to bridge this gap and provide the structure needed to direct attention, focus effort, and self-regulate (Gollwitzer, 1999; Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006). Knowing how to create an effective development action plan and do so quickly and flexibly as needs arise supports agile learning.

Achieving a complex learning goal typically involves taking a variety of actions (e.g., reading an article, questioning a role model, practicing a new behavior). Effective development action plans break down these steps into manageable "bites" over which leaders perceive they have control—the expectation of being able to perform a given behavior, obtain needed resources, or overcome obstacles encountered (Ajzen, 2002). Perceived behavioral

control accounts for a significant amount of variance in intention leading to actual changes in behavior (Armitage & Conner, 2010).

In addition, having a clear plan primes leaders to see and take advantage of learning opportunities in the flow of their work (Gollwitzer, 1999). When a development action plan includes situational cues for behavior, it reduces the amount of conscious cognitive effort and self-regulation needed to identify relevant opportunities. For instance, a development plan action, such as "Seek feedback from one person after each key stakeholder meeting," provides specific cues to where and when this action should be taken.

Demonstrating Self-Control and Resilience

In the process of pursuing their learning goals, leaders face a multitude of challenges in regulating their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions. As might be expected, self-control is a powerful predictor of learning outcomes (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005). Similarly, resilience in bouncing back from failure is equally important and learnable (Yost, 2016). A complete review of all possible interventions for strengthening self-control and resilience is beyond the scope of this chapter; however, the following are learnable behaviors that that support learning agility: (a) recognizing unproductive or competing thoughts and emotions; (b) breaking automatic habits; (c) implementing strategies to minimize procrastination; (d) anticipating obstacles; and (e) engaging in behaviors that support resilience. (see Chapter 12 for additional resources on resilience).

Practical Suggestions for Developing Learning Agile Behaviors: Mobilizing

Understand How to Create an Effective Development Action Plan

An effective action plan (a) provides a structure for goal setting focused on learning versus performance; (b) helps instill a belief that the leader has control over his or her behavior; (c) primes the leader to see cues for practice opportunities; and (d) supports mitigation of obstacles. It is often useful for leaders to think of development action plans as similar to a project plan, with which most are familiar. Research cited in the previous section and our

experience suggest that development action plans are most effective when they include the elements listed in Table 6.4.

Create "If–Then" Statements

This technique involves considering potential obstacles (e.g., competing commitments, external influences) and then identifying effective ways to respond. Sheeran and Webb (2016) suggest using the following language: "*If* [opportunity/obstacle] arises, *then* I will [respond in this way]" (p. 13). For example, "*If* I hold back in meetings because I feel awkward, *then* I will remind myself that it is normal that doing something new will feel uncomfortable for a while" If–then plans are effective, because when an obstacle is encountered it is already mentally paired with a productive response.

Overcome Immunity to Change

Kegan and Lahey (2009) suggested most people have a powerful "immunity to change," a psychological protection mechanism that, paradoxically, prevents making changes that will often be beneficial. Immunity mapping is a metacognitive process that can help in self-regulating the underlying commitments and unproductive beliefs that prevent leaders from reaching their goals. Table 6.5 provides an example.

Monitor Progress

The inclusion of clear milestones and indicators of success in the development plan provides a means of monitoring one's progress. However, they should be adaptive to changing circumstances. Progress monitoring as part of reflection or conversation with a coach/mentor can be helpful. Many technology apps that exist for goal monitoring may also be useful. However, it is important for leaders to avoid simply "checking off the boxes." Emphasis should be placed on what was learned from each experience or action taken. Given the complexity of leadership challenges, mastery often requires extended, consistent focus; celebrating incremental progress toward goals helps sustain motivation. Coaches and accountability partners can help recognize successes along the journey.

Table 6.4 Development Plan Elements

Development Plan Element	Purpose
Clear goal statement	Clearly articulating goals is time well spent and makes the rest of the plan easier to create. Goals should be worded to reinforce a growth mindset and vivid enough to create a clear mental picture of the desired end state. Commitment is likely to be higher for goals where the outcome is perceived as important and with high relevance to personal identity. The number of goals should be limited (2–4) to be realistic in regard to time, resources, and focus.
Actions	Actions should include a mix of learning approaches (e.g., reading, learning from others, on-the-job practice, and experiences). For actions that will take place during naturally occurring work situations (e.g., providing or seeking more feedback), it is best to describe the types of situations so that the leader will be primed to "see" these opportunities when they arise. It's also important to think of the action items as a flexible, "living" idea list where additional actions may be added and others deleted as learning transpires.
Resources and time frames	When resources are required, such as support from trusted advisors, it can be helpful to list them as specifically as possible. A time frame for completing various actions provides an accountability mechanism; however, time frames may vary considerably depending on the nature of the action. For example, for reading the time frame may be "1 article per week," while for others it may be situation specific, such as "after each staff meeting."
Success indicators	Leaders often struggle with identifying success measures because they are accustomed to focusing on "hard data" types of metrics. It is useful to reflect on the question, What will I see, hear from others, and feel internally that will indicate to me that I am making progress?
Obstacle mitigation	Considering the potential obstacles that are anticipated can increase the odds of success. For each potential obstacle, create "if–then" statements as described in the text.

Enlist an Accountability Partner

Some leaders find it useful to identify a friend, family member, colleague, or coach to serve as an accountability partner—someone trusted to hold the leader to the standard he or she has set. This person should be someone (a) who can be trusted as a confidant, (b) who is willing to point out blind spots or excuses, (c) who asks about progress, and (d) who can serve as both a cheerleader and shoulder to cry on. This process works especially well when the relationship is reciprocal (e.g., when peers serve as accountability partners for each other).

Table 6.5 Immunity to Change Mapping

Elements of the Map	Example
1. Visible Commitment: The desired behavior or goal	Be more open to new ideas and flexible in responding.
2. Doing/Not Doing : The behaviors we are or not actually engaging in	Cutting off new ideas (doing), not asking questions to solicit others' views (not doing).
3. Hidden Competing Commitments: The reasons for doing something inconsistent with our visible commitment	To feel pride in ownership of new approaches.
4. Big Assumptions: The beliefs that fuel the inconsistency	I won't be valued if new ideas are not seen by others as mine.

Based on Kegan, R., & Lahey, L. (2009). *Immunity to Change: How to overcome it and unlock the potential in yourself and your organization.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.

Summary and Conclusions

There is no question we live in a world where change is constant, and to thrive, learning must keep pace. As a result, learning agility is needed more than ever before and can—and must—be developed so leaders can maximize their potential and to ensure organizations sustain competitive advantage. The following are some of the lessons we have learned while writing this chapter and from our experiences as coaches and organizational practitioners.

Lessons Learned

An amazingly deep, rich body of both theory and research exists to help us better understand how Learning Agile Behavior can be developed. Our goal has been to heed the words attributed to Isaac Newton in 1675 that we can see much farther "by standing have provided the foundational building blocks for developing the Learning Agile Behavior needed to thrive in the decades ahead. In this chapter, we have integrated these building blocks into a simple model—being, doing, connecting, thinking, and mobilizing—that we hope will be practical and meaningful.

Far less is known about when to deploy various Learning Agile Behaviors within the stages of personal change and adaptation. Developing one's learning agility is itself a dynamic process within a dynamic context, which is likely more iterative than linear. Currently, the *process* of developing learning

agility can be described better as an art than science. Table 6.6 provides a framework suggesting which Learning Agile Behaviors may be most relevant at various stages of the Learning Agile Process. However additional research is needed on the specific sequence, timing, and combination of Learning Agile Behaviors that optimize the development of learning agility.

Questions Yet to Be Answered

While there is much we know about the learnable behaviors that contribute to learning agility, there is even more we have yet to understand. The following are just a few of the questions yet unanswered:

Table 6.6 Learning Agile Behaviors Relevant to the Stages of the Agile Learning Process

Learning Agile Behaviors	Stage of Learning Agile Process for Which Learning Agile Behaviors Are Most Important
1. Observing • Mindful Awareness • Environmental Scanning • Future Forecasting	• Detection of need for change and identification of type of change required • Self-regulation of focus and energy
2. Doing • Seeking Out Stretch Experiences • Experimenting • Taking Risks • Demonstrating Courage • Sourcing Information and New Frameworks	• Implementation of Learning Agile Behaviors • Self-Regulation in Changing Thoughts, Emotions, and Behaviors
3. Connecting • Asking For Help • Seeking, Accepting, and Using Feedback • Learning Vicariously From Role Models • Leveraging Coaches and Mentors	• Implementation of Learning Agile Behaviors • Monitoring Effectiveness of Change
4. Thinking • Reflecting • Engaging in Metacognition • Questioning and Demonstrating Curiosity • Changing Mental Models	• Detection of Need for Change • Implementation of Learning Agile Behaviors
5. Mobilizing • Setting Goals and Establishing Indicators of Success • Action Planning for Development • Demonstrating Self-Control and Resilience	• Planning for Change • Self-Regulation in Changing Behavior

- Which Learning Agile Behaviors are most important in enhancing one's overall learning agility? Is this dependent on an individual's predisposition to be learning agile?
- Which dispositional personality, motivation, and cognitive characteristics are most likely to influence the effectiveness or adoption of Learning Agile Behaviors? How much of learning agility is learned versus genetic?
- What are the incremental and interaction effects of Learning Agile Behaviors used in combination? What is the best "formula" if not 70–20–10?
- Can it be empirically demonstrated that different Learning Agile Behaviors are more important at particular stages in the Learning Agile Process? Does the sequence matter?
- Where in the Learning Agile Process is the velocity of learning beneficial, and where can speed be detrimental? What contributes most to increasing velocity of learning? Is learning velocity more important in some contexts than others?
- Which of the Learning Agile Behaviors are more easily developed, and which are most challenging? Which are influenced most by the surrounding environment and organizational support?
- How do we best measure the acquisition and growth of Learning Agile Behaviors?
- What is the role of a leader's manager in supporting and encouraging Learning Agile Behavior? Are learning agile leaders more effective at developing learning agility in others?
- What organizational cultural attributes and practices best facilitate Learning Agile Behavior? How is reciprocal determinism at work?

Conclusion

We all have much to gain by encouraging partnerships among researchers and practitioners to answer these important questions. Doing so may require breaking down silos among disciplines such as industrial–organizational psychology; educational, social, clinical, and counseling psychology; and adult learning. Further, it will likely require greater integration of learning agility with related areas of study, such as learning ability and velocity, performance adaptation, and even wisdom. Clearly, it is essential that we accelerate our understanding of how to develop the

learning agility of those we assess, coach, and guide in order to achieve the flourishing leadership pipeline needed to face the unknown leadership challenges of tomorrow.

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