

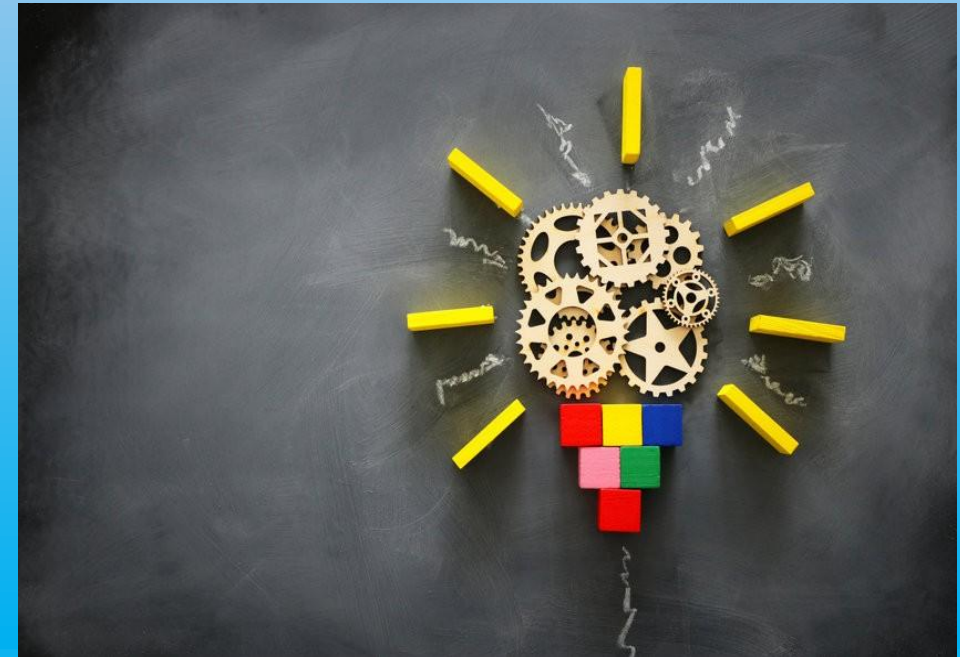
From Impact to Insight Building a Strategic Mindset

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We Will Cover...

- What is Strategic Thinking?
- Characteristics of a strategic thinker
- How to build your strategic thinking skills
- How to demonstrate your strategic thinking to maximize your impact
- Teaching future leaders how to become strategic thinkers



Nature vs Nurture???



YES

A red, rounded rectangular button with a 3D effect and a shadow, containing the word "YES" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. A faint "dreamstime" watermark is visible behind the text.

What is Strategic Thinking?

Deliberate and rational

Analysis to support long-term success

Identifies potential threats, opportunities and alignment with larger goals

Not just for big decisions

Decisions consider broader objectives





A Continuous Mindset

How a Leader

- Evaluates Situations
- Allocates Resources
- Sets Priorities
- Balances Immediate **AND** Future Needs



Transactional vs Transformational

Transactional

- Decisions/Ideas/Solutions based on reflex
- Outcomes based on “What we have always done”
- Lacks creativity/innovation
- Risky in light of changing world

Transformational

- Decisions/Ideas/Solutions based on reflection
- Allows you to navigate ambiguity
- Be creative and create value
- Adapts to changing environment
- Looks to the future

What Does a Strategic Thinker Look Like?

- Long-Term Vision
- Complex Issues
- Anticipate Change
- Actions Aligned with Larger/Organizational Goals
- Decisions Have Lasting Impact



Characteristics of Strategic Thinkers

- Future focused
 - Long-term vs Short-term
 - Use technology/new techniques
 - Help others use them as well
- Comfortable with Uncertainty
 - Calculated Risks
 - Consider Perceived vs Actual Benefits
 - Assess cost/benefit of Challenges
- Solution Oriented
 - Anticipate challenges & propose creative solution
- Embrace Change
 - Open to & solicit new perspectives
 - Flexible & adaptable
- Lifelong Learners
 - Intellectual curiosity and big picture thinking
- Able to Delay Gratification
 - Solutions for long-term rather than immediate problem
- Work Effectively & Simplify
 - Able to delegate
 - Develop efficient work processes
- Utilize Self Reflection
 - What could have gone better?

Developing Your Strategic Thinking Skills

- **Build Your Knowledge Base**
 - Look beyond the day-to-day
 - Good understanding of your industry
 - Recognize trends
 - Follow industry leaders
 - Attend conferences and webinars
 - Subscribe to publications





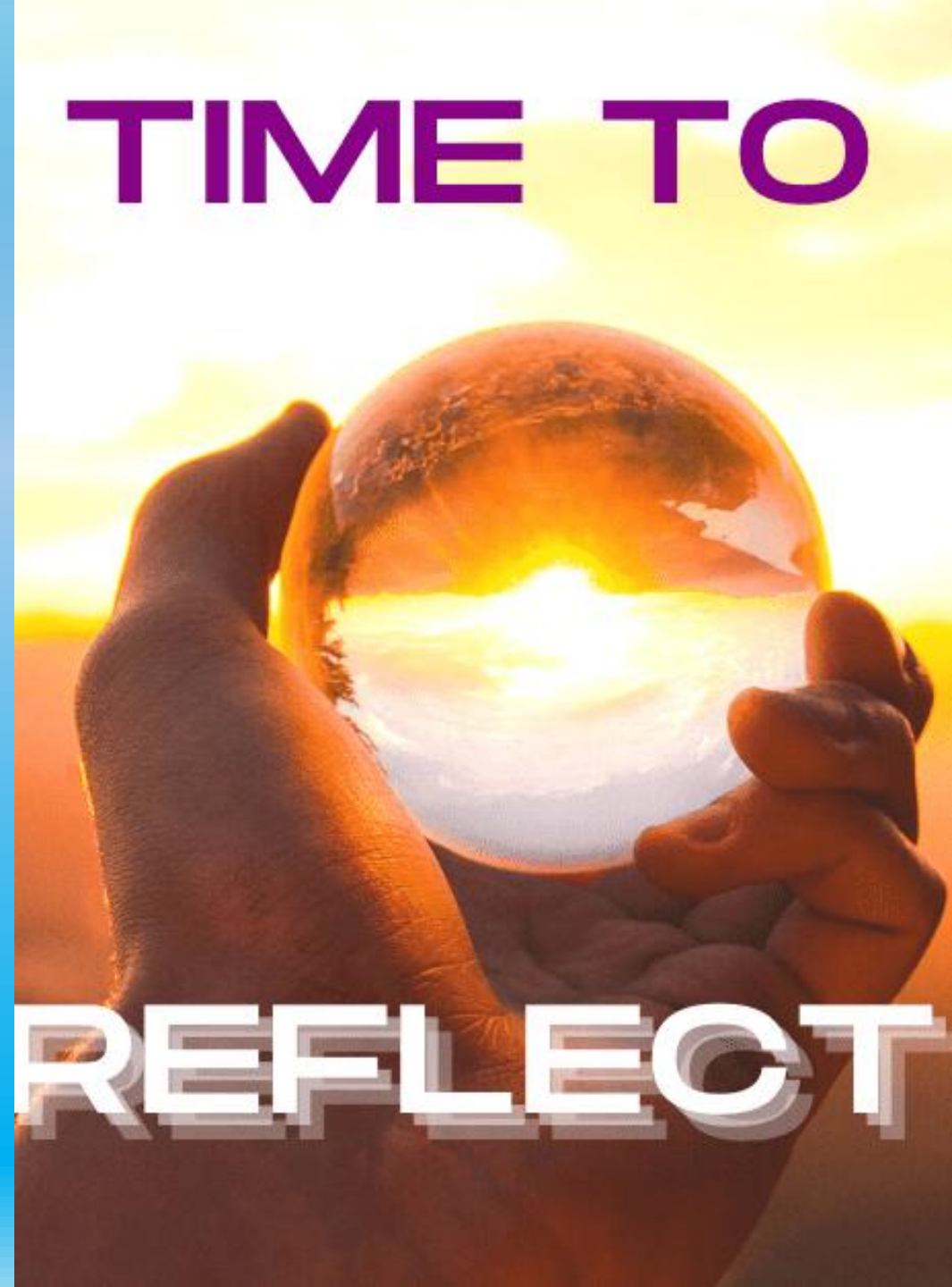
- **Ask Better Questions**

- Be Curious
- Don't immediately jump in with a quick solution
- Take time to ask questions
 - "What are long-term implications?"
 - "Are we solving the problem or the symptoms?"
 - "What does success look like in 1 year? 3 years? 5?"
 - "Does suggestion support the broader goals of the organization?"

- **Explore Scenarios & Alternatives**
 - Consider “what-ifs”
 - What is the worst case scenario? Best case scenario? Most likely case scenario?
 - Brainstorm with your team
 - What have others done? What worked? What didn't and why?
- **Learn from Strategic Peers**
 - Surround yourself with strategic thinkers
 - Engage in discussions outside of your comfort zone



- **Make Time for Reflective Thinking/Embrace Conflict**
 - Not just looking forward but learning from the past
 - Conflict can produce good outcomes
 - Helps avoid making same mistake twice
 - Keep a strategic journal and identify trends
 - Conduct “post mortems”
 - Ask for feedback



Demonstrating Strategic Thinking

- Sound Strategic
 - Structure written/verbal communication sequentially and logically
 - Keep it concise
 - Prime your audience
 - Give the answer first
 - When with your supervisor
 - focus on higher level discussion
 - Cover tactical issues in email
 - Focus on their priorities
 - Make good use of face to face time



- **Be Engaging**

- Avoid being long-winded/complicated
- Focus on essentials
- Use analogies and metaphors to be relatable
- Make conversations strategic by asking reflective, thought-provoking, open-ended questions



- **Be Open Minded**

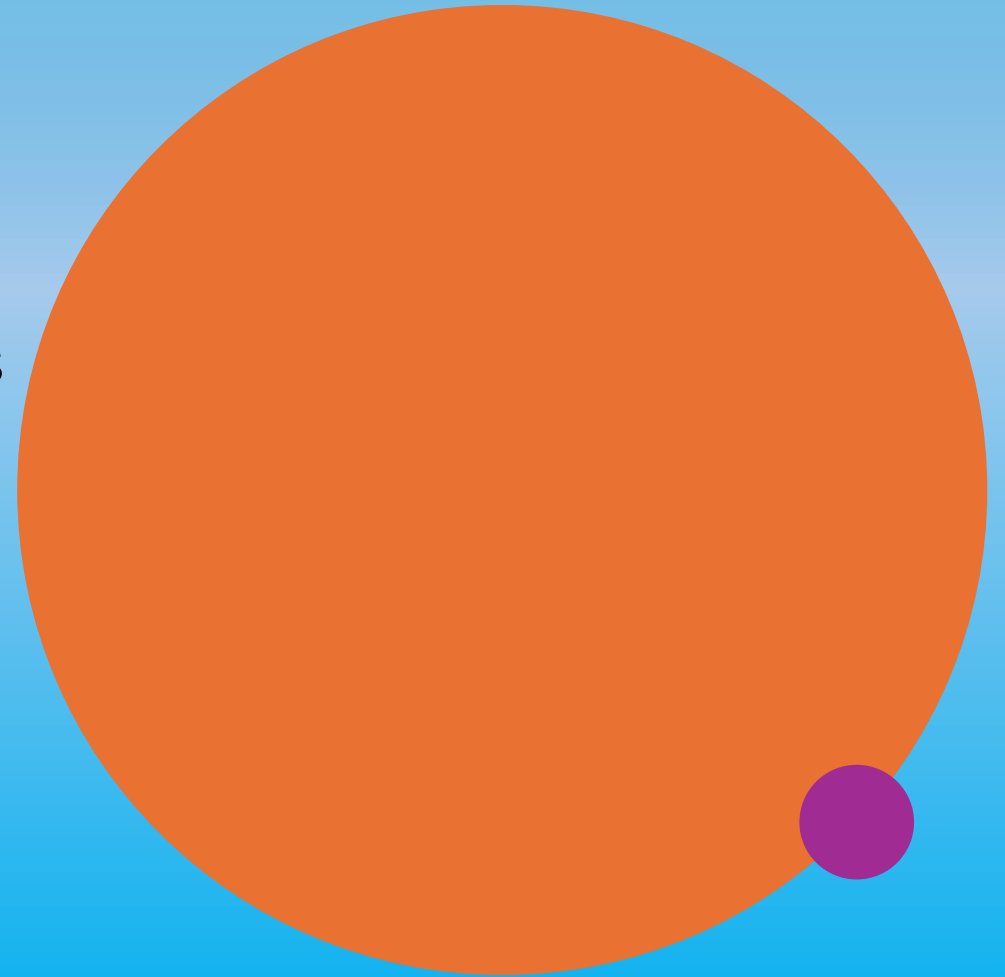
- Practice strategic listening
 - Listen closely, actively and openly to others
- Include others' perspectives
- Seek feedback
 - Feedback is a gift
 - Ask for specific feedback





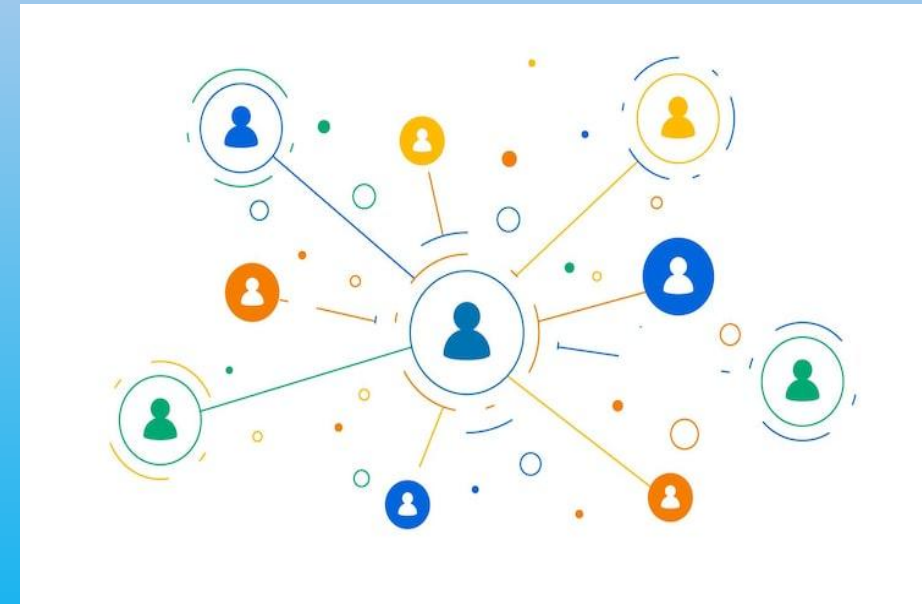
- **Look Beyond Yourself**

- Be a visionary
 - focus on the broader organization rather than yourself/your role
 - Point out how your idea will effect others
- Show how your knowledge can be used for new ideas
- Bring solutions, not just problems
 - Don't state the obvious (what has been done in the past)
 - Think outside the box
- Stay calm
 - Focus on the facts, not your emotions
- Cultivate strategic relationships
 - Leverage relationships intentionally
 - Develop relationships you might not otherwise have



Paying It Forward

- Encourage Reflection
- Provide them with relevant information in the field
- Keep people informed about internal news
- Connect emerging leaders to mentors
- Communicate philosophy, mission & goals clearly and frequently
- Reward thinking, not just reacting
- Include strategic thinking in your leadership development



**What Will You Do
Next?**



In Summary...

- Not purely innate and can be learned
- Process for generating solutions, ideas, opportunities
- Aligned with longer term vision
- Use reflection for more transformational thinking
- Defining characteristics of strategic thinkers
- Habits to build your strategic thinking
- Strategies for demonstrating your skills
- Paying it Forward

Thank You


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