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## 1.0 Introduction

This report discusses the concept of personal effectiveness across leadership qualities and evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of leadership qualities identified in this way. It will also assess negative behaviours as well as positive behaviours associated with personal effectiveness within the concept of the CEO Genome Project. The report then discusses a personal learning style evaluated through the results of Honey and Mumford's Learning Styles. It involves assessing personal strengths and limitations as well as a critical evaluation of the main learning style identified, concerning the challenges associated with remote working and learning online. Lastly, the report analyses two different online platforms to develop personal effectiveness. This involves judging the platforms to determine the most appropriate choice for personal effectiveness development, based on the identified main learning style.

Personal effectiveness is defined by (Murdock and Scutt, 2003) as "a distinct set of behavioural competencies" identified across individual behaviours and skills, such as acting assertively, and ethically and expressing self-control. This self-knowledge is then applied towards evaluating personal behaviour as well as applying it to the behaviour of others for leading and managing others. Therefore, personal effectiveness is directly associated with the development of personal performance across such behaviours and skills. Individuals who practise personal effectiveness are empowered to develop their skills and improve their knowledge and behaviour to meet the dynamic needs in the contemporary, globalised business environment (Murdock and Scutt, 2003). Personal performance is linked to organisational success, thereby making personal effectiveness a valuable practice in contributing to this outcome for businesses.

## 2.0 Task 1 - Case Study Review

### 2.1 Assessing how different business leaders demonstrate or lack key skills or behaviours of personal effectiveness

This task assesses key personal effectiveness skills and behaviours from the instance of the CEO Genome Project, which is a research based on a 10-year longitudinal study on the "specific attributes that differentiate high-performing CEOs" (Botelho et al., 2017). The importance of the study is determined in its key finding of four important behaviours that can be developed by

individuals; 87% of surveyed executives who developed personal effectiveness based on these behaviours increased their likelihood of becoming high-performance executives “dramatically” (Botelho et al., 2017). Therefore, the report will analyse these four behaviours and link them to different contemporary business leaders from global organisations for grounded analysis.

### **Deciding with speed and conviction**

The CEO Genome Project findings demonstrated that CEOs <sup>2</sup> who were described as being decisive in making decisions were “12 times more likely to be high-performing CEOs” (Botelho et al., 2017). Therefore, making quick decisions relies on personal decisiveness which is a distinct behavioural quality from the hard skills and intellectual capacity of CEOs. As noted by the CEO Genome Project findings, business leaders must make quick decisions to make the most of the opportunities present at any given moment. The report can identify this skill in the instance of Warren Buffet's decisive decision-making to profit from the opportunity that was present during the 2008 financial crisis (Phillips, 2013). The investment banking firm Goldman Sachs was more resiliently positioned to weather the impact of the financial crisis, even as the firm's share price continued to decline steadily following the collapse of Lehman Brothers (Phillips, 2013). Buffett invested <sup>5</sup> \$5 billion into Goldman Sachs through his own investment company Berkshire Hathaway, leading to eventual returns of \$3.1 billion across cash and an ownership stake by Berkshire Hathaway in Goldman Sachs (Phillips, 2013). This shows that Buffet made a high-risk decision that was nonetheless tempered with his risk appetite, which made the cost-benefit evaluation of the decision favourable for Buffet. His initiative shows that business leaders have a strong internal locus of control, which determines their self-belief towards their own decisions as having a corresponding external impact (Dumitriu et al., 2014). Therefore, this conviction drives their capability for making decisions with speed and conviction.

### **Engaging for impact**

This quality sees CEOs engage decisively with their stakeholders towards making the most of opportunities presented in business. From the CEO Genome Project's findings, CEOs who were able to align the motivations and commitment of stakeholders in the shared goal of value creation were “75% more successful in the role” (Botelho et al., 2017). A key part of this quality of personal effectiveness lies in communicating effectively through verbal as well as non-verbal gestures. The report can link this quality to the business leader Sundar Pichai, who serves as the CEO of Google. His elevation to CEO from internal promotion is characterised by his ability as

the person “who always launched things that people wanted” (Adams, 2015). His <sup>6</sup> talent as a “spokesman for Page’s ideas” led Pichai to effectively communicate the concepts and ideas of Google founder Larry Page, thereby making Pichai capable of engaging directors and vice presidents for impact (Adams, 2015).

### **Adapting proactively**

Market adaptation is another key behaviour identified in the CEO Genome Project, which is evidenced by the dynamic changes that can occur in the contemporary globalised business environment (Botelho et al., 2017). Instances such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Brexit motion and the Russian-Ukrainian war occurred shortly within the last three years (Tett, 2023). This denotes a VUCA quality of volatility-uncertainty-complexity-ambiguity that requires agility and adaptability (Tett, 2023). This shows how different macro-environmental outcomes can develop spontaneously, and makes it necessary for CEOs to be adaptive. The quality of adaptability is linked with a growth mindset that compensates for mistakes by viewing them as opportunities for learning; 90% of surveyed CEOs in the CEO Genome Project were capable of this quality (Botelho et al., 2017). Therefore, the report expresses an instance of adaptability in the recent case of CEO Koji Sato at Toyota. Toyota has been unable to fully capitalise on the market opportunity for electric vehicles due to competition from rivals and internal inadequacies; the appointment of Koji Sato was meant to address this concern in the firm (Take, 2023). Under his adaptive leadership, Toyota has launched a long-term roadmap for debuting 10 new electric vehicles by 2026 as well as fully overhauling the internal strategy of the firm to adapt to the electric vehicle market growth (Take, 2023).

### **Delivering reliably**

The CEO Genome Project findings determined that leaders with a track record of reliability were “twice as likely” to be selected for the role of executive leadership (Botelho et al., 2017). Therefore, reliability sees CEOs utilise organisational resources and collaborate with stakeholders to maintain transparency and integration of different systems, resulting in a reliability that is observable and predictable. CEOs such as Jeff Bezos of Amazon are examples of this quality, as Bezos has been consistently reliable in delivering results due to his focus on customer-centric development of business practices (Gallo, 2021).

### 3.0 Task 2 - Evaluation of Learning Style

#### 3.1 Assessing my main learning style and explaining its strengths and limitations

As per the evaluation conducted under the Honey and Mumford questionnaire, I scored higher under the 'Theorist' element. After receiving a score of 17 out of the rest three elements, I got to know I followed a theorist learning style. The theorists are people who tend to learn best by understanding the reasons behind any causal factor. For instance, being a theorist I imagine analysing and accumulating information as a critical consideration that values logic and rational thinking. Therefore, any learning that does not create engagement through interrogative opinions usually creates problems for a theorist (Furnham, 1992). Certain strengths and weaknesses surrounding my main learning style can be explained in the below manner. *[Referred to Appendix 1]*

##### **Strengths**

Firstly, I thrive through logical thinking during any discussion, or while practically allocating myself to a specific position within the project.

Secondly, as a theorist, I have ample opportunities to ask questions. Even during the module classes and discussions, I took separate sessions with the module instructors in trying to discern salient features of business and business leaders (Furnham, 1992). That allowed me to properly identify the characteristics that separated the two constituents.

Thirdly, I tried to analyse the purpose behind every form of study. That includes comparing case studies with individual leaders, whose contexts might have been used in the above section. That allows me to draw differing opinions, thereby creating a contrast of mindsets that might view leaders in separate lights (Sadler-Smith, 1997).

##### **Limitations**

Firstly, most of the time, the arguments, discussions, and debates I broach tend to be ambiguous. That seldom dissolves doubt but creates confusion more often.

Secondly, a part of my learning involves emotions and feelings, which can affect my professional standards concerning questions related to specific topics and sub-topics.

Thirdly, sometimes looking at things in a complicated manner, where it is less required might allow me to delve into the crux of the matter (Sadler-Smith, 1997). That could cost me much time, which could have been devoted to other separate studies of the module.



### **3.2 Critically evaluating my main learning style about the challenges of learning online and remote working**

For theorists, who learn by going through concepts, models, and facts both remote working and online learning might present challenges of their own.

Firstly, theorists being analytical might warrant making learning complex when it is far from the same. Similarly, during remote working, I might not rely on team members, as they might make my solution finding easier when they look for complex processes to arrive at the solution (Sadler-Smith, 1997). If the above practices are not applied by a theorist like me, then I grow demotivated by both factors.

Secondly, any theorist might be new to a learning environment which could also feature online learning. During such an exposure, I expect my teachers to pose challenging questions that might differ from common elements presented in the module as a form of learning. It could be in the form of MCQs, discussions, or random deliberation of subtopics and topics. Even in a remote working environment, I expect that everyday projects bring challenges of their own that cannot be predicted easily (Sims et al., 1989). A settlement to such a learning and working environment becomes easier for me, which might otherwise become a struggle.

Thirdly, I tend to thrive at time-related conflicts both during online learning and remote working. The constraint of limited time increases the cognisance within me, and the sense of responsibility to do it before the allocated hour. Most of the time, I will fail if the challenges related to time inclusive of online learning and remote working do not arise as expected (Sims et al., 1989). In such a case, my productivity will likely go below expectations. That includes typical expectations from an individual who is emphasising a theorist's learning style.

## **1** **4.0 Task 3 - Analysis of Online Platforms for Developing Personal Effectiveness**

### **4.1 Judging two online platforms for improving personal effectiveness**

#### **Coursera**

The online learning platform Coursera offers over 7,000 courses developed in association with over 275 leading companies and universities globally (Hurley, 2022). The platform offers free



courses for basic personal effectiveness development, as well as paid courses with more depth for upskilling into advanced learning concepts. This platform is therefore well-resourced in its provision for opportunities towards increasing personal development, as the multitude of courses offers the potential for developing personal effectiveness behaviours such as timely decision-making.

### **Udemy**

In comparison to Coursera, Udemy offers a more comprehensive selection of courses as it has over 213,000 courses available for studying by individual learners (Hurley, 2022). However, the instructors on Coursera are more uniformly accessed through top instructors from leading universities and companies, whereas Udemy offers a more open platform for teaching that is accessible to everyone. While Udemy provides certifications based on the completion of courses, these are not accredited, unlike Coursera's accredited certifications.

## **4.2 Analysing the appropriate platform of choice for personal effectiveness development based on the main learning style**

As a theorist-driven learner, my style of learning is characterised by the practice of analysis of information and its synthesis towards developing objectively-grounded solutions. Theorist style of learning is complementary to the assimilation of facts and observations across logical theorisation grounded in logical understanding. My analysis of the appropriateness of both platforms leads me to conclude that Coursera will be more effective in developing my personal effectiveness qualities as a theorist-style learner. The reasoning behind this can be briefly discussed across individual points below.

Firstly, the development of courses in association with leading universities and companies makes Coursera's courses more grounded in logical reliability and standardisation of quality (Hurley, 2022). Each course will be designed with the appropriate criteria that are held by top instructors, making the courses more objectively defined compared to the selection of courses at Udemy. As a theorist-style learner, I will benefit from access to such courses as they will have a higher quality of content accessible from reading material to recorded videos.

Secondly, the access to top instructors for learning and development makes Coursera more capable of developing my personal effectiveness qualities (Hurley, 2022). The structured and academic approach to learning aligns with my position as a student, thereby enhancing my

learning experience holistically. By having access to top instructors, I can engage in discussion and gain valuable feedback which will help me objectively develop my competencies across personal effectiveness.

Thirdly, the category of courses available on Coursera is more closely aligned with the qualities of personal effectiveness discussed in the CEO Genome Project findings within this report. For instance, the category of ‘personal development’ makes courses accessible that will develop personal competencies such as decision-making and responsiveness which are attributed to the key behaviours of business leaders. It will also help me to develop my personal effectiveness competencies as a theorist as well as through the accessible qualities of leaders defined by the findings of the CEO Genome Project.

Fourthly, an additional advantage of using Coursera is that it will enable me to develop digital technology competencies through the course category of ‘information technology’ (Hurley, 2022). The integration of digital technology has been consistent across both the academic and business environments. This requires a higher priority of learning IT-related digital tools and technologies which will be useful in the long term to engage across different contexts of learning and professional growth (Li, 2022).

In summary, the findings above lead me to conclude that Coursera will be more appropriate for my personal effectiveness development as a theorist-style learner.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

The report has analysed the findings from the CEO Genome Project towards discussing the qualities associated with personal effectiveness. The report discussed these findings within the scope of the CEO Genome Project while linking the identified qualities with real-world business leaders across different global business contexts. The findings were also backed up with research on qualities that enabled such behaviour like a strong internal locus of control resulting in assertive and timely decision-making among effective CEOs. The discussion on personal learning styles considered the dominant style type of a theorist learner based on the findings from the Honey and Mumford Learning Styles framework. This was discussed through the scope of its advantages and disadvantages as a learner and was further developed in the third task. The evaluation between Udemy and Coursera was used to present a discussion relevant to both academic learning and development as well as long-term growth. In this context, the relevance of

transferable skills from learning to professional environments was considered the instance of digital technologies. Therefore, the choice of Coursera was ultimately selected to ensure the most appropriate platform is considered in association with the learning style.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Honey and Mumford Questionnaire

Activist	15
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(Source:Self-created)

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