Simon's "Learning Case" - Phillip

Leadership Practice

Client's First Name: Phillip

Name for This Practice: Mentoring instead of telling

Current Behaviour	Desired Behaviour
Phillip insists on telling people in his team what the solution is. Every now and then then he has an outburst and moves suddenly from appearing to support the change to the opposite. This repeats after a couple of weeks.	Phillip is the acknowledged technical expert in the team. He should coach and mentor his team mates to help them level up.
Current Mindset	**Desired Mindset**
• I am the expert • I must make the major decisions or at least approve them • That's my job • I get satisfaction by being the one true technical expert	• My job is to help my team mates to develop • Together we can create amazing results • I can get satisfaction by developing others

Primary Action Arena: Pivotal conversations

Type of Agility: Stakeholder Agility (understanding other team members) and Creative Agility

Shift in Agility Level: Expert to Achiever

Capacities to Develop: Ability to empathise with other team members. Understanding that he judges ideas from others too early and closes down opportunities for mentoring to develop skills in others. Power style shift – from highly assertive to more balanced?

Level of Reflective Action to Develop:
Awareness – Greater reflective capacity
Intent – To achieve strategic outcomes
Awareness of his pendulum like swings in power style. Ability to catch himself in doing this. Ability to catch himself when judging ideas from others too early and listen more.

Relevant Background

Client's Role in the Organization: Companywide technical lead
Type of Organization Business information services company based in the UK
Motivation for Coaching: I was hired to help the company introduce agile methods. I coached the leadership team (directors) and Phillip and his colleagues. My mandate was to get this new way of working to work. Their objective in introducing agile was primarily concerned with faster time to market than with traditional methods.
Context/situation: To provide you with helpful feedback what would it be helpful for us to know about the larger situation in which your client is working? Phillip initially bought-in to the idea of agile enthusiastically, even though it was clear (it was discussed openly with him) that his role would change to an intrinsically self-managing agile team. After a couple of weeks, he had an outburst during a meeting and was quite disparaging about the whole initiative (that's the polite version!). He and I discussed his concerns after the meeting, and we ended with him giving his commitment to support the initiative. The cycle repeated every two or so weeks.
Challenge: This was several years ago – well before the Leadership Agility book was published. I am very interested in revisiting this situation (which was challenging for me at the time, as well as Phillip) through the lens of Leadership Agility. How could Leadership Agility focused coaching have helped to understand what happened and to support Phillip in his journey. We did find a solution – I'll leave the rest of the story to the session.
Feedback: What kind of feedback would be of greatest value to you? See above