

INSPIRE

On Leadership

Fall 2021

Growing Leaders

Through my years in leadership, I've had wonderful opportunities to mentor others whether they were seeking growth as newer leaders or defining their path toward their career aspirations. As I help these growing leaders, I often find myself sharing 4 consistent perspectives.

Opportunities do not always come at the most convenient times. High performing individuals sometimes get tapped for a career change when they least expect it, or the type of opportunity may not be necessarily in their plan. Statements like "I want to accomplish more in my current role" or "I have not really thought of this as a possible option" are not uncommon. I usually ask these leaders to embrace the moment, at least be open to a conversation and explore what the opportunity might mean for their professional growth.

Highly talented leaders are often tapped for many stretch opportunities. Top performers can easily become the "go to" for special assignments. Stretch assignments are great for unleashing the

potential and are never small commitments. Define a direction and strategically choose commitments to showcase strengths, establish a new relationship or invest time in a developmental area.

Allow for vertical stretch. For leaders that are identified as promotion-ready in 1-2 years, have them spend about 20-30 percent of their time in functions for the next level role. This helps to create organizational visibility as well as expand their network to the next tier of leaders.

Expand mentor options. Often, mentors come from within the same function or organization, yet we know there are partner functions or industries that influence our businesses. Consider seeking out mentors outside of the same function or in partner industries to broaden business acumen and relationships.

Helping others reach their potential is one of the most rewarding for many leaders. It is such a privilege to be part of their journey.

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