

Support your
leaders' well-
being and help
them thrive

Unlock Growth & Impact

How you can elevate the performance of your
leaders amidst change and uncertainty

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The perfect guide for senior executives who want to achieve change

" When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves. "

Victor Frankl

Why it matters

The evidence about how a tolerance of ambiguity enables people to embrace the unknown and unlock growth and impact is clear.

An ability to embrace ambiguity is related to a range of positive workplace behaviours, such as **improved problem-solving, decision-making, creativity, and risk-taking.**

Individuals who have a higher tolerance of ambiguity are also **more effective and efficient in changing environments**, and experience increased job satisfaction and overall well-being.

In short, people with a **clear tolerance of ambiguity** are more confident in their ability to unlock growth and impact when faced with new challenges and opportunities.

Are you challenged because ...

- People are like deer in headlights; unable to maintain focus, make decisions or be productive when faced with ambiguity or uncertainty at work.
- Some people are blocking opportunities, slowing down progress and holding back the rest of the team.
- You need innovative solutions to respond to challenges and people are stuck in old ways of thinking.
- Progress is slow because people are overwhelmed by the volume and complexity of work.
- Crucial decisions are being avoided because people don't have all the information they want.
- People are focused on the obstacles and limitations instead of exploring other perspectives that could lead to new possibilities.
- People give up too easily and are unwilling to take risks or try new things because they have a hard time dealing with failure and setbacks.

Are you afraid your people ...

- Won't keep up with the required pace of change.
- Will make costly mistakes, miss opportunities, and experience low morale when faced with the unknown or ambiguous.
- Will need you to provide more guidance or make decisions before they take action.
- Are not working together because they're too worried about the consequences of the unknown.
- Will not speak up, lacking confidence in their ability to respond to uncertainty.
- Are stifling their creativity by clinging to the familiar and trying to control the uncontrollable.

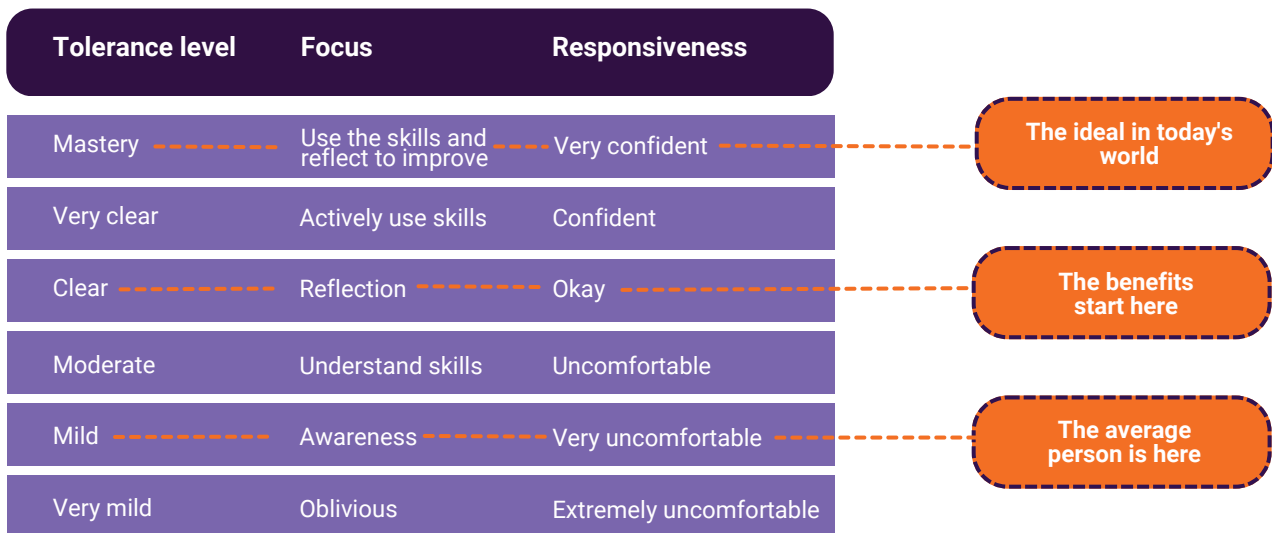
① <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/raising-the-resilience-of-your-organization>.

<https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/issues/megatrends.html>

Where are your people now?

Queensland University of Technology research suggests 90% of people in the workplace do not have a clear tolerance for ambiguity. This presents a massive opportunity to unlock latent growth and impact.

The 10% that do, experience less stress, a greater sense of well-being, and an ability to be more decisive, enabling them to navigate a way forward despite unknowns.



What's really going on?

The way we respond to uncertainty and ambiguity is built into our **DNA**.

We all have an automatic and instinctive fight, flight or freeze response. Unfortunately, that can stifle growth and prevent performance that delivers the desired impact.

This response served us well when we needed to avoid predators who saw us as a food source but can cause more problems than it helps solve in today's complex and increasingly ambiguous work environments.

What sets people with a tolerance for ambiguity apart is their ability to manage this fight, flight or freeze response.

Often a leader's own comfort with ambiguity and desire for challenging work contributed to the decision to promote them.

These types of leaders may be comfortable working in the grey space, **but if they're not focused on how they manage the uncertainty for their people, they could be inadvertently stressing them out.**

And that can lead to a loss of trust and confidence in leadership and compound the existing constraints on achieving growth and impact.

² O'Connor, Peter, Becker, Karen, & Fewster, Kerryn (2018). Tolerance of ambiguity at work predicts leadership, job performance, and creativity. In Creating Uncertainty Conference, 2018-07-01 - 2018-07-05

The solution

People are **more likely to trust a leader who helps them feel more confident and comfortable with the discomfort** of the unknown. Growth happens in that space between who people were and who they need to be next.

Everyone needs a Tolerating Ambiguity Toolbox that can expand as they learn new and diverse ways of working.

Building a tolerance of ambiguity can also reduce the risk of burnout. The evidence tells us **there is a strong correlation between tolerance of ambiguity, improved well-being and a reduction in the risk of stress and burnout.**

The good news is that Tolerance of Ambiguity can be measured and improved.

Once a person's unique response pattern is known, they can build up their tolerance of ambiguity 'muscle' the same as they would lifting weights in a gym.

Developing tolerance of ambiguity skills builds the resilience, flexibility, and mental agility required to handle ambiguity effectively, so you and your people can thrive, grow and have a bigger impact in ever-changing and unpredictable contexts.

Queensland University of Technology research resulted in the Indicator of Ambiguity (IAm) assessment tool and the identification of the following skills associated with tolerance of ambiguity:

- 1 Unlocking inertia
- 2 Assertion
- 3 Curiosity
- 4 Creativity
- 5 Finding focus
- 6 Courageous actions
- 7 Flexible thinking patterns
- 8 Mindfulness

We leverage people's existing tolerance of ambiguity strengths and focus on development opportunities that build people's tolerance. It's like an immune system that helps you withstand and adapt to the viruses and bacteria that emerge in the surrounding environment.

Just like a strong immune system allows you to resist infections and recover quickly, having at least a clear tolerance for ambiguity empowers you to embrace the unknown, grow and deliver impact without being overwhelmed.

" The most successful people are those who can navigate ambiguity."

Bob Iger, former CEO, The Walt Disney Company

Everyone has their own unique strengths and opportunities for development across the three dimensions that make up a tolerance of ambiguity - comfort with ambiguity, desire for challenging work and managing the uncertainty.

The **benefits** associated with **comfort with ambiguity** are people who:

- experience minimal stress or concern when faced with uncertainty.
- are able to recognise the benefits of working with new, different and diverse people.
- are open-minded and keen to learn from others.

The **benefits** associated with a **desire for challenging work** are people who:

- are curious and enthusiastic to solve the 'unsolvable'.
- consider failing as a learning opportunity.
- have a very low chance of boredom.

The **benefits** associated with **managing the uncertainty** are people who:

- are strong communicators whose concise and simple language provides clarity.
- Have a strong professional network.
- Are not rigid and are able to flex and adapt as needed.

Knowing what you and your people's tolerance of ambiguity is right now is not enough to unblock growth and impact.

People need to learn and practice the skills that will build up a Tolerance of Ambiguity.

If your people are like many others, they want to experience some fun together, and although you know that's important for their well-being and commitment to the workplace, you'd also like them to learn something when they come together.

Consider the relevance of these questions to your situation:

How high is your tolerance of ambiguity?

How confident are you in managing uncertainty?

Will your workplace be less or more ambiguous in the next 12 months?

We use **game-based learning (GBL)**, which is proven to enhance your people's knowledge and skill transfer, stimulate their thinking and boost their self-efficacy when it comes to unlocking growth and impact.

We will help improve how your people think and respond to ambiguity because our mission is to increase the proportion of the workforce that tolerates ambiguity. We want to break the 10% barrier so more people can thrive, grow and have a positive impact.

Our approach will help your people learn more effectively than traditional teaching methods because **our purpose-built game Ambiguity Apocalypse will challenge people in a fun and safe way** and enable them to experience the thoughts, intentions, feelings, and other senses triggered by ambiguity. They will recognise their areas for development and can start practising while the concepts they've learned are still fresh.

3 Kirriemuir, J., & McFarlane, A. (2004). Literature review in games and learning.
Prensky, M. (2001). Fun, play and games: What makes games engaging. *Digital game-based learning*, 5(1), 5-31.
Qian, M., & Clark, K. R. (2016). Game-based Learning and 21st century skills: A review of recent research. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 63, 50-58.

About Us



Susanne Le Boutillier is a skilled coach, mentor, facilitator, and consultant. She helps people and organisations thrive in complex and uncertain situations. She has extensive experience in workforce strategy, corporate human resources, industrial relations, governance, strategy and achieving transformational change.

She led the Transition Office during the split of a \$10 billion public health organisation into 17 separate legal entities, impacting 80,000 employees.

Susanne is known for her compassionate and collaborative approach. Her perceptive insights help people and teams recognise their strengths and grow into who they need to be next. She combines a logical perspective with a mindful understanding of human needs.

Her style is engaging and expressive, yet calm and confident. Susanne's observant and discerning nature ensures she provides thoughtful guidance.



Samantha Rush is a curiosity-driven person who loves exploring the magic that happens when different ideas combine, creating something new. She helps individuals, teams, and organisations to unravel complexity and facilitate decision making that challenges thinking and safeguards psychological safety.

Samantha is passionate about all kinds of growth and progress and has faced plenty of ambiguity and tough decisions during her time in Intelligence and Corporate Executive roles, as a Company Director, Business Advisor and Strategic Consultant across sectors and industries.

Aside from comprehensive and diverse experience, Samantha's qualifications include an MBA, Psychology, HR and Industrial Relations, and she is currently undertaking a PhD researching decision making.

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Samantha and Susanne are accredited I Am partners able to administer the I Am assessment.