ALEX VOLCANSEK

Personal Development

I grew up in Hagley, just outside Birmingham. I love Birmingham and The Black Country and with friends and family still there, it will always be home. This is how I come to greatly appreciate both the Birmingham Symphony orchestra and their brilliant young conductor, Mirga Grazinyte-Tyla, as well as the taste of Enville real ale!

I am a Business Psychologist and a consultant, facilitator and coach. My calling to psychology came at 14 years of age, having been totally absorbed by Jonathan Miller's book and TV series States of Mind. After gaining psychology degrees at Reading University (BSc) and Birkbeck College (MSc), I worked for many years as a self-employed psychologist, including projects with Oxford Psychologists Press using the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (another personality tool).

My ministry is all about enabling people and building leadership capability in the broadest sense. This includes fostering team working and negotiating career/life transition. I am called to work from people's strengths – from their unique 'God given gifts'. This means adapting to each and every individual, and working in partnership together to make good use of his unique finger print. I have coached over 200 clergy to date.

As of January 2018, I am also Senior Organisational Development Partner at the Met Office (climate and weather office in Exeter). Devon is my second home, and with the countryside, sea, coast and farming community, long may it be so.

Thanks to James Lawrence, the last 20 years have included serving Arrow.

It is a delight to be taking part in your Arrow programme. I actually came to faith after my very first Arrow – so I know how transforming it can be!

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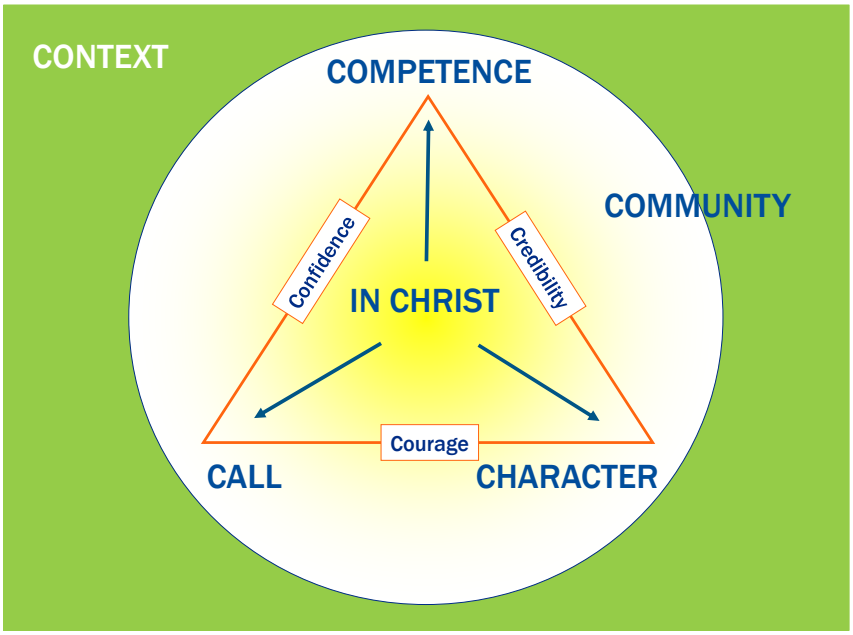
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
Introduction

ARROW'S PURPOSE

Arrow's purpose is to develop Christian leaders:

- Leaders dependent on the grace of God, confident about who they are in Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- Leaders clear about their unique call and consistent in living it out.
- Leaders serving the Church with personal lives modelled on the servant character of Jesus.
- Leaders passionate for and committed to evangelism.
- Leaders skilled and competent to lead within a church or Christian organisation at a time of great challenge and change.

It is summed up in the strap line 'to equip leaders to be led more by Jesus, lead more like Jesus, and lead more to Jesus.' Based on the model at the heart of the programme...



Arrow is about life change/transformation.

Acts 20:28 'Keep Watch...'

KEY INSIGHTS

'Integral to leadership growth and perseverance is leadership evaluation in the context of ongoing mentoring.'

A Passion for Leadership, Sandy Jones

'The exercise of Christian leadership is founded in watching over yourself: developing virtues, habits, disciplines and skills over a lifetime of formation, which undergirds and gives integrity to the leadership which is offered.'

Steven Croft

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

What Leads to Leaders Leaving their Leadership Role?

Disappointment with ministry	Experience/expectation do not match
Inter-personal conflicts	Unresolved
Senior leaders	Prove to be a disappointment
Neglect 'inner life' growth	Pressure to perform and achieve
Preparation and training	Inadequate or not continued
Leadership skills	Fail to master
Calling	Not clear

Which of these do you or can you see yourself struggling with?

KEY INSIGHTS

'The marks of a leader that people follow and who persevere for the long haul in ministry are seen in those who cultivate a teachable spirit, a capacity to handle feedback, and a willingness to identify and transform internal fears and unhealthy driving factors.'

Sandy Jones

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
Residential 1

Throughout the Arrow Leadership Programme we will be using a variety of assessment inventories to aid self-awareness. As mentioned in the material sent out with the inventories, these assessments are meant to act as helpful guidelines. You may well find yourself disagreeing with certain assumptions or conclusions. That's fine, but please do keep yourself open to what they may be saying, even if it is occasionally uncomfortable! It is often worth checking out areas you're unsure of with either those who know you well or with a trained interpreter of the instrument. During residential 1 we focus on two instruments.

1. 16 PF-5 with Alex Volcansek

Alex is a qualified Occupational Psychologist who will meet with each participant for one hour during residential 1. The material we sent you prior to the residential explains the background to 16PF-5.

In preparation for your meeting with Alex, read through the report and prepare the areas you'd like to cover in your interview:

- Identify areas for clarification i.e. 'I don't understand…'.
- Identify areas of agreement i.e. 'That is so me…'.
- Identify areas of uncertainty i.e. 'I'm not sure that is me…'.
- Identify areas of concern i.e. 'That's me, and I'd like to work on that…'.

2. Arrow Character / Call / Competency Model

This model is at the heart of Arrow. It was developed by considering qualities and characteristics that are foundational to Christian leadership. No one person will score high on every factor, but this model provides one way of assessing growth and development against some specifically Christian criteria. This is not technically a psychometric instrument, but rather a 360 review tool. The Arrow 360 Review includes insights from the five members of your feedback group. The following will help you make the best of your Arrow 360 Review report.

For each question there are a possible five scores from your review group, and your own score. The number in the box indicates the number of people who placed their tick in that box. Where four or more reviewers gave the same response, the box is highlighted in yellow. The number in the blue column reminds you where you placed your tick.

When considering this instrument please look for:

- **Trends** These may come in a number of ways. (1) Where more than one person has scored you differently from how you graded yourself. This may indicate an area to reflect on. If only one person has scored you very differently to everyone else this may be due to their lack of knowledge of you in that area, or exactly the opposite, i.e. they know you very well in that area. Prayerful reflection may help you decide which it is. (2) Where you have consistently scored yourself higher or lower than your feedback group. This may indicate you have been unnecessarily harsh or lenient with yourself.
- **Identify strengths** These are the areas to be thankful for and build on.
- **Look for gaps/limitations** These are the areas where you need to know yourself well and how your limitations/gaps impact others (see the development plan for further ideas on this).

A CHECKLIST OF WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

1. Identify when you are meeting with Alex and your leadership partner. Timetables are displayed in the ballroom.
2. Prepare for the meeting by reading through the reports using the ideas on this page.
3. Pray for openness to what God wants to reveal through the process.
4. Attend the meetings and then reflect on the insights you've gained.
5. Complete the integration for this module and identify your development goals for between now and the next residential. Send these to Matt by 31 May.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
Residential 1 (contd)

In preparation for your meeting with your leadership partner:

- Read through your Arrow 360 in the same way as 16PF5 and go along prepared to explore some of the insights from the review. Your leadership partner will also be able to offer insights from your references where appropriate.
- You will discuss a variety of things, including your time with Alex (if you've already had it), your relationship with God, areas for growth and development.

How to Handle Feedback Well

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Many people are quickly dismissive of the positive feedback they receive. Perhaps because:

- They think they know it already and so it does not bear hearing again.
- They are a harder self-judge than their reporters. 'If they knew what was going on ten minutes before that they wouldn't have been so kind…'
- They think their reporters are 'sucking up'.
- They think their reporters are deluded.
- They think that to dwell on the positive and be pleased with it is to be conceited.
- They are so disturbed by the negative that they place all their attention on that.

Please appreciate the positive feedback you have received.

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

People may be dismissive of the negative feedback they receive. Perhaps because:

- They have heard it all before 'It's the way I am and it got me this far…'
- They think there is nothing that can be done about a particular trait or skill.
- They think their reporters are taking the opportunity to 'score points'.
- They think their reporters are deluded.
- They think that they are an OK person so 'how could this be true?'

Common reactions to negative feedback are such that there is even a mnemonic to describe them – SARAH:

- **Shock** 'They said what about me?'
- **Anger** 'How could they say that considering…?'
- **Rejection** 'They would say that wouldn't they?'
- **Acceptance** 'I wonder what led them to say that?'
- **Honesty** 'Perhaps I am like that.'

Avoid the trap of getting stuck in any one phase but do allow yourself to travel through the phases. When you are at 'acceptance' or 'honesty' you can begin to decide whether to accept or reject the feedback. If you:

- **Reject it** Think about the consequences of taking no action (for you, others, those you lead).
- **Accept it** Think about how you might go about changing or developing and who might be able to help you.

Avoid the trap of trying to tackle everything at once. Prioritise and try to tackle no more than three things at a time.

KEY INSIGHTS