



# Rethinking

## EVOLUTION

*If you can see the path laid out in front of you step by step, you know it's not your path. Your own path you make with every step you take. That's why it's your path.*

Joseph Campbell

### Why it matters

Haven't taken your strategic plan out of the drawer since 2018? No worries! Taking an evolutionary and emergent approach to strategy—setting and leading through change confers a number of advantages:

- You can move with 'careful speed' – seeking input and reflecting, but not allowing a vacuum to develop. At a time of change, swift action brings certainty and confidence.
- You can respond, in the moment, to the detailed nuance of your context, which no plan would have been able to predict.
- You can empower and engage everyone. There is much more motivation to be had if people have a say in how things are done, and feel able to make a difference.
- You can devolve decision making to those on the frontline, who are best equipped to make the best decisions.

### Four Ingredients

There are four ingredients leaders can focus on to support an evolutionary approach:

- Vulnerability
- Hope

- Reflection
- Process

### Things to Try and Questions to Ponder

- Where can you show vulnerability as a leader to make space for new voices and new ideas?
- What can you ask your team for input on? Where can you show curiosity?
- How can you help your team to set some realistic short or medium terms goals? In what sort of areas?
- What opportunities can you create to generate ideas about possible pathways to achieving those goals?
- How can you build the self belief of your team? When did you last take stock of all you've achieved together? When did they last get a chance to shine, and to show what they can do?
- Have you intentionally designed-in opportunities for learning?
- What could you do to support you in watching and listening more closely?
- Why not try journaling for a bit?
- Or join some meetings as an observer rather than to lead them?
- Are you using processes to help you, or are you trapped by them? Surface your processes and think about which you need, which you can tweak, and which to ditch.