

### 3.What leadership skills were instrumental in the team achieving their goals?

Bennis (1985) have stated that 'Leadership is one of the most observed but least understood phenomena on earth.'The movie "McFarland, USA" portrays various leadership skills exhibited by Coach Jim White and his team in the areas of professional, social, cognitive, goal setting, and initiative, these can be explained using **the strata plex approach** (Mumford et al., 2007). **Under this approach, leadership skills are broadly classified into cognitive, interpersonal, business, and strategic skills.**

#### The Leadership Strataplex Model: Four skill requirements

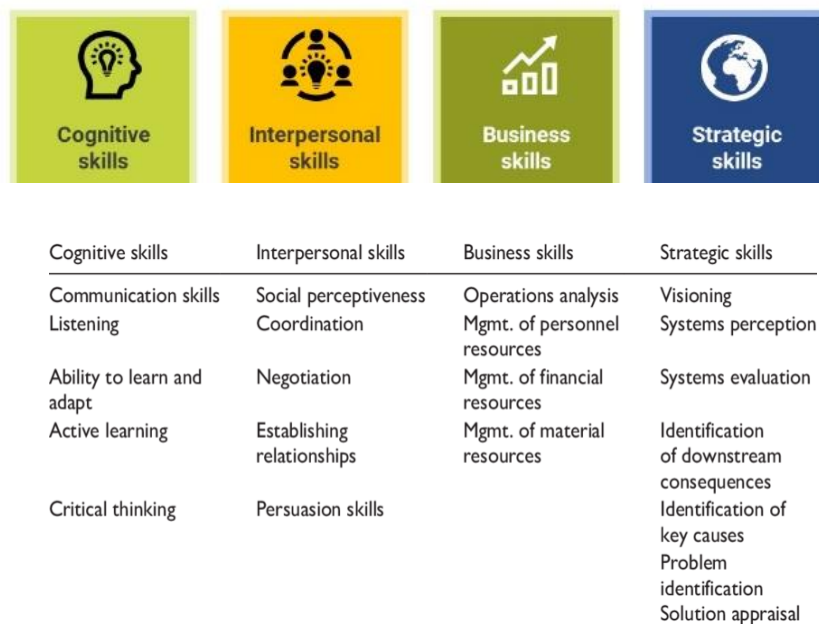


Figure 1The four leadership skills categories (Mumford et al. 2007)

#### 3.1 Cognitive skills:

Fundamental cognitive abilities include collecting, processing, and distributing information (Zaccaro, 2001). Shipper and Dillard (2000) suggest these abilities are crucial for effective communication.

Coach Jim's exceptional **observation skills** enabled him to identify his students' talents and potential. He recognized Victor and Johnny's outstanding speed and stamina while working in the fields, identifying their potential as runners.

Furthermore, his **critical thinking** and **adaptability** enabled him to analyze his team members' strengths and weaknesses, assigning roles strategically to optimize their performance. He also **adjusted his coaching style** to connect with his predominantly Hispanic team members **and learn** Spanish phrases.

### 3.2 Interpersonal skills:

Effective social skills require the ability to exercise sound judgment, navigate complex social situations, maintain a friendly and outgoing demeanor, and effectively communicate, negotiate, coordinate activities, and persuade others toward a specific goal (*Mumford et al., 2007*).

Coach White visited the Diaz family and **engaged in authentic conversations**, these showed his commitment to **forming personal connections**.

Production is high when team members are satisfied, involved, belong, and relate to the leader. This includes excitement, hilarity, and cheering each other (*Cohen, 1988*). Coach continuously **supported the team** from their first competition against Palo Alto through the qualifiers and finals, accompanying them to the farm, helping with tasks, and inviting them to his house for recreational activities.

### 3.3 Business skills:

Leaders must possess business skills to make informed decisions about procurement, equipment allocation, technology, and recruitment. These skills include managing scarce resources and human capital and conducting operational analysis (*Mumford et al., 2007*).

Coach White exhibited business skills, particularly in **resource allocation**. He engaged in fundraising activities and secured sponsorships to support the team. This proactive approach showcased his ability to **leverage external resources effectively**. Additionally, he demonstrated resource allocation skills by creatively utilizing limited resources. He arranged early morning practices to accommodate the students' work schedules, optimizing their time and **minimizing costs**.

### 3.4 Strategic skills:

To effectively navigate an organization, one must possess high conceptual skills that enable them to comprehend complexity, handle ambiguity, and positively impact performance (*Zaccaro, 2001*). These skills encompass planning, visualizing a vision, perceiving systems, and exhibiting emotional intelligence (*Mumford et al., 2000*).

Coach White had **a clear vision** for transforming his team into a competitive cross-country

team, which he developed based on observing their natural running abilities. He **set specific goals** for the team, emphasizing personal growth and surpassing limitations. He tailored training regimens and modified diets through **strategic planning** to enhance the team's performance.

Overall, Coach White's observational abilities, learning adaptability, critical thinking, relationship-building, resource allocation, and strategic planning contributed to the team's achievements.

---

### References:

- Bennis, W.G., & Nanus, B. (1985) *Leaders: The strategies for taking charge*. New York: Harper & Row
  - Caro, N. (2015). *McFarland USA*: Walt Disney Picture.
  - Cohen et al., (1988), *applied multiple regression or correlation analysis the behavioral sciences* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Hillsdale, NJ; Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
  - History vs Hollywood: McFarland, USA. [www.historyvshollywood.com](http://www.historyvshollywood.com). Retrieved 2015-05-23.
  - McFarland, USA. "American Film institute. Retrieved March 6, 2022
  - Mumford, T., Campion, M., & Morgerson, F. (2007). The Leadership skills strataplex: Leadership skill requirement across organizational levels. *Leadership quarterly*, 18, 154-166
  - Tom S. (2014), *Leading change workbook*, University of West of Scotland, Edition 1.
  - Shipper, F., & Dillard Jr. J.E. (2000). A study of impending derailment and recovery of middle managers across career stages. *Human Resource Management*, 39, 331-345.
  - White, James (1 July 2013) "Kevin Costner on for McFarland" *Empire*. Retrieved, Dec 2013
  - Zaccaro, S.J. (2001). *The nature of executive leadership: A conceptual and empirical analysis of success*, Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
-