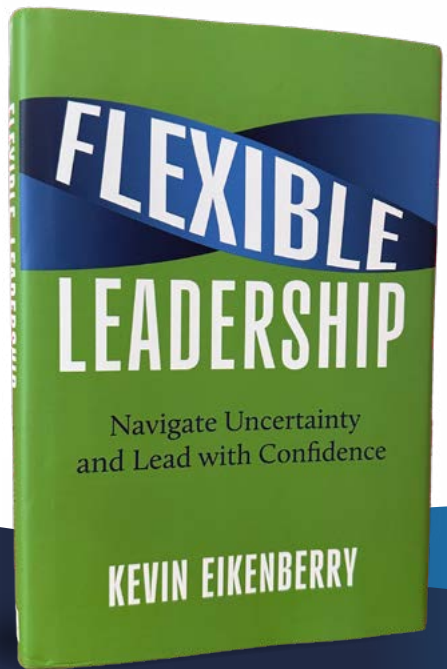


A Pocket Guide to **Understanding Flexors**




A PRODUCT OF THE KEVIN EIKENBERRY GROUP

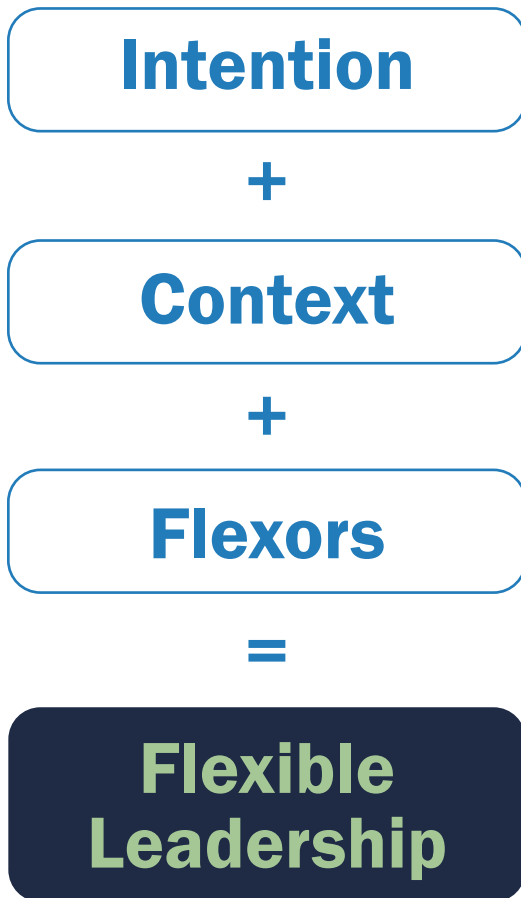
Welcome to your pocket guide
to **understanding flexors.**

A Pocket Guide to Understanding Flexors

To become a more Flexible Leader you need to know what you can flex. When you see two ideas or approaches as opposites a paradox is created in our mind. Forcing ourselves to think that we must choose one, keeps us from flexing. But when we see the two approaches in tension with each other symbiotic, not opposing, we allow ourselves to shift directionally from one approach to another.



A Flexor is a pair of possible options or approaches that many generally see as opposing, that Flexible Leaders see as symbiotic. Flexors are a key part of the Flexible Leadership Approach:



You will gain a full understanding of this approach (and learn more about the flexors) in *Flexible Leadership: Navigate Uncertainty and Lead with Confidence*.

This Pocket Guide is meant as a reference for you to help you use these flexors in your daily work of leading.

Two Types of Flexors



The ***Big Picture Flexors*** are over arching approaches that broadly guide your decision making and thinking. Some you may hold almost as profoundly as values.



The ***Everyday Flexors*** relate to the choices you can make all day long. While Big Picture Flexors influence your thinking, Everyday Flexors can be applies multiple times on most days.

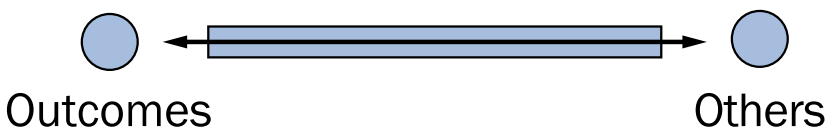
The Flexors

Remember, this isn't the book itself – there is far more about each Flexor, what it is, how to apply it and more, there. This Pocket Guide will give you a question to consider and two high level pieces of advice about each Flexor and point you to pages in the book where you can find the details.

The Outcomes/Others Flexor

– starts on page 68

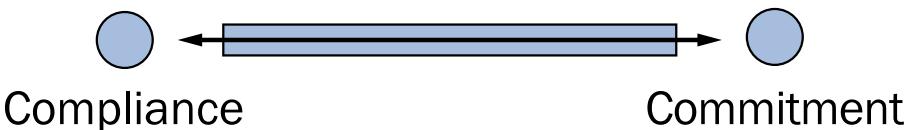
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards Outcomes if there is pressure or high stakes in the outcome.
- Lean towards Others when you want to increase engagement and ownership.



The Compliance/Commitment Flexor

– starts on page 80

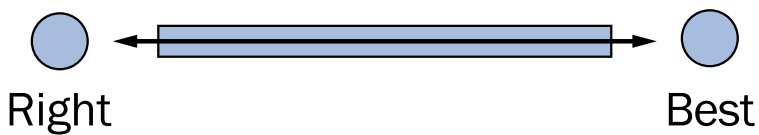
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards Compliance when the context is Clear, meaning there will likely be widespread agreement and understanding about your path or decision.
- Lean towards Commitment when the context is Complicated or Complex and you need/value the input of others to clarify next steps or options.



The Best/Good Flexor

– starts on page 84

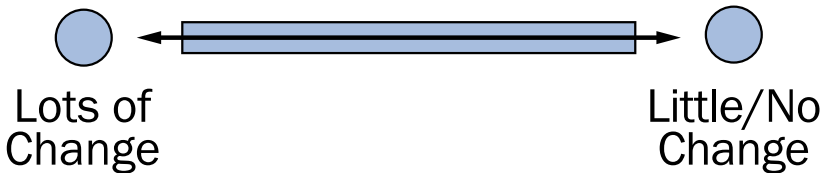
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards Best when the context is clear, and most everything is known.
- Lean towards Good when there are unknowns and variables that are hard to control or understand (i.e. Complicated and Complex contexts.)



The Change Flexor

– starts on page 88

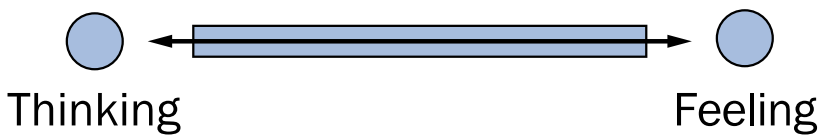
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards more change when the context is Clear, and people are more likely to see and understand the issues and challenges.
- Lean towards less change when the context is Complex. Slow down the rate of change to make sure all voices and perspectives are heard.



The Thinking/Feeling Flexor

– starts on page 94

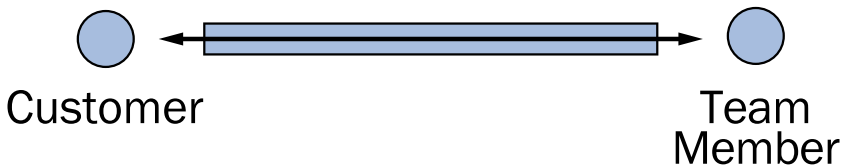
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards thinking when the context is Clear (not just assumed to be Clear by you).
- Lean towards Feeling when the context is Complex, and multiple competing ideas and opinions exist.



The Customer/Team Flexor

– starts on page 98

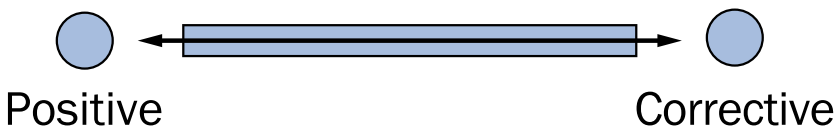
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards more change when the context is Chaotic. The team might need to step up – because if the Customers leave – you have no business.
- Lean towards the team members when the processes are strong and stable. When processes are working well for the customer, we can pay more attention to the needs of the team as a balance.



The Feedback Flexor

– starts on page 102

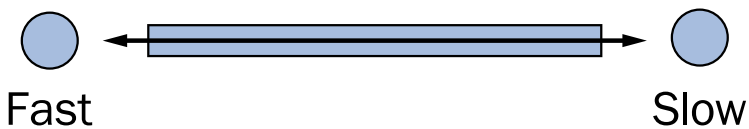
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards corrective when people are doing something unsafe or unethical or are otherwise unaware of the possible consequences.
- Lean towards positive when people don't know (or you aren't sure they know) they are doing something well.



The Fast/Slow Flexor

– starts on page 106

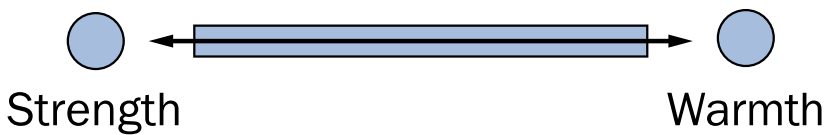
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards fast when the context is Clear. When the data exists and the process is well understood, and there is general agreement, speed helps.
- Lean towards slow when the context is Complicated or Complex.



The Strength/Warmth Flexor

– starts on page 111

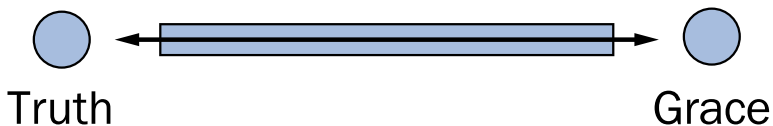
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards more change when the context is Clear, in these cases your strength, confidence and decisiveness will be very helpful and viewed positively.
- Lean towards warmth when it is early in your relationship with others.



The Truth/Grace Flexor

– starts on page 115

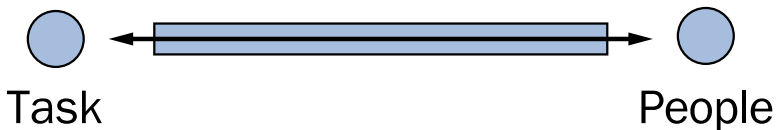
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards truth when the context is Clear. Facts here are more generally understood and will be more likely to be accepted.
- Lean towards grace when the context is Complicated or Complex and the unknowns are causing anxiety, fear or more uncertainty.



The Task/People Flexor

– starts on page 122

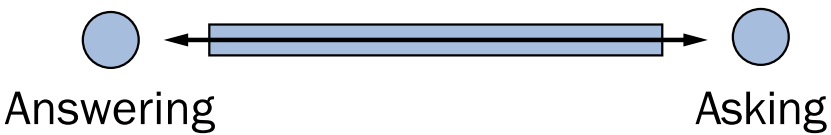
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards task when the context is Clear. As clarity across the team grows you can move in the direction of the task itself.
- Lean towards people when the context is Complicated. Remember that uncertainty is unsettling – so checking in with people about their thoughts and feelings can be incredibly helpful for all of you.



The Answering/Asking Flexor

– starts on page 126

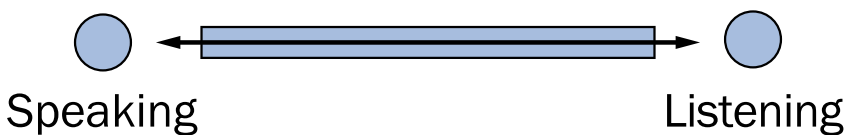
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards answering when the context is Clear. In these situations there is likely a known and accepted answer - and you know it.
- Lean towards asking when you want to build the confidence of others.



The Speaking/Listening Flexor

– starts on page 130

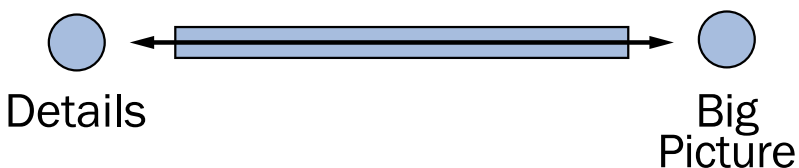
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards speaking when the context is Clear. When there is already a level of agreement, your input as a leader can be valuable and confirming.
- Lean towards listening when the context is Complicated or Complex. In these situations if you speak too much or too soon you may discourage others from sharing their opinions, perspectives and ideas.



The Details/Big Picture Flexor

– starts on page 134

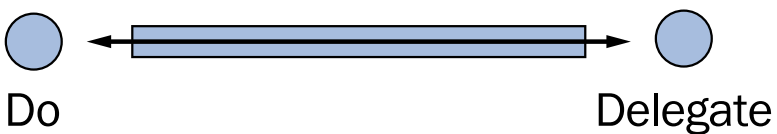
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards the details when you have the requisite knowledge. Your knowledge of the details may be helpful here. But remember that the longer you haven't been doing the work, the more likely some of the details have changed.
- Lean towards the big picture when the team is in conflict over the details. When people are in conflict about the details, help them see the big picture (and make sure you don't get sucked into the conflict with them).



The Do/Delegate Flexor

– starts on page 138

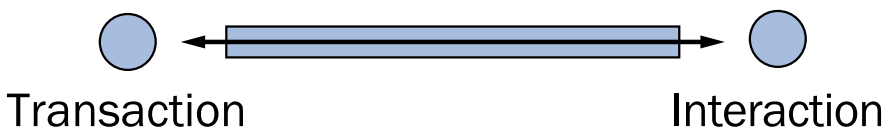
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards doing when the team is overwhelmed. It might be time to roll up your sleeves and lend a hand.
- Lean towards delegation when you have team members that need a new challenge.



The Transaction/Interaction Flexor

– starts on page 142

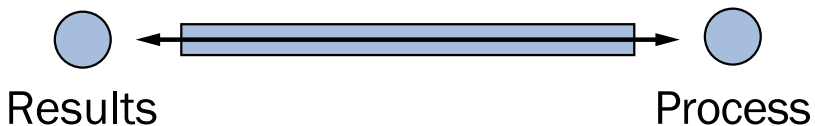
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards transaction when the context is Clear. When everyone knows what needs to happen next, you can likely get on with the work comments.
- Lean towards interaction when you want to be empathetic.



The Results/Process Flexor

– starts on page 145

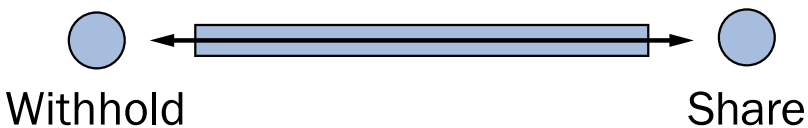
- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards results when you have a short-term objective. Here you are likely better off getting it done than examining the process you will use.
- Lean towards process when the context is Complicated. Ask yourself if your process allows for enough experience and expertise to be valued, heard and applied.



The Withhold/Share Flexor

– starts on page 149

- Which direction do you naturally or normally lean on this Flexor?
- Lean towards withhold when the information is sensitive.
- Lean towards sharing when the context is Complicated or Complex. Sharing what you do know can be helpful in helping the team determine possible courses of action.



Where Do I Start?

That's a lot of Flexors! And that is the point of the Pocket Guide. You can't consciously work on all of these at once, so don't try. Rather, take these three steps.

1. Identify your "Starter Flexors" – which 2-3 Flexors do you want to work on first?

- Notice any that you have mental resistance to – those might be areas you don't flex much at all and might be the best place to start.
- Notice any that you immediately gravitated to. If you hear yourself saying "yes, I know that would help me," you've also likely found a Starter Flexor.

2. In any situation you think you might want to consider flexing, ask the overarching question: which direction could I lean to get better results for everyone (both now and in the future)?
3. Start small – but start. Allow yourself to move past your habit, natural inclination or style and try flexing on a situation and see what happens.

A group of business professionals in a meeting. In the foreground, a woman with dark hair is seen from the back, looking towards the right. Behind her, a man with short brown hair is smiling and looking towards the right. To the left, a woman with dark hair is smiling. In the background, a man with short brown hair is looking towards the right. The image is a close-up shot of a group of people in a meeting, with a focus on their expressions and interactions. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, sans-serif font.

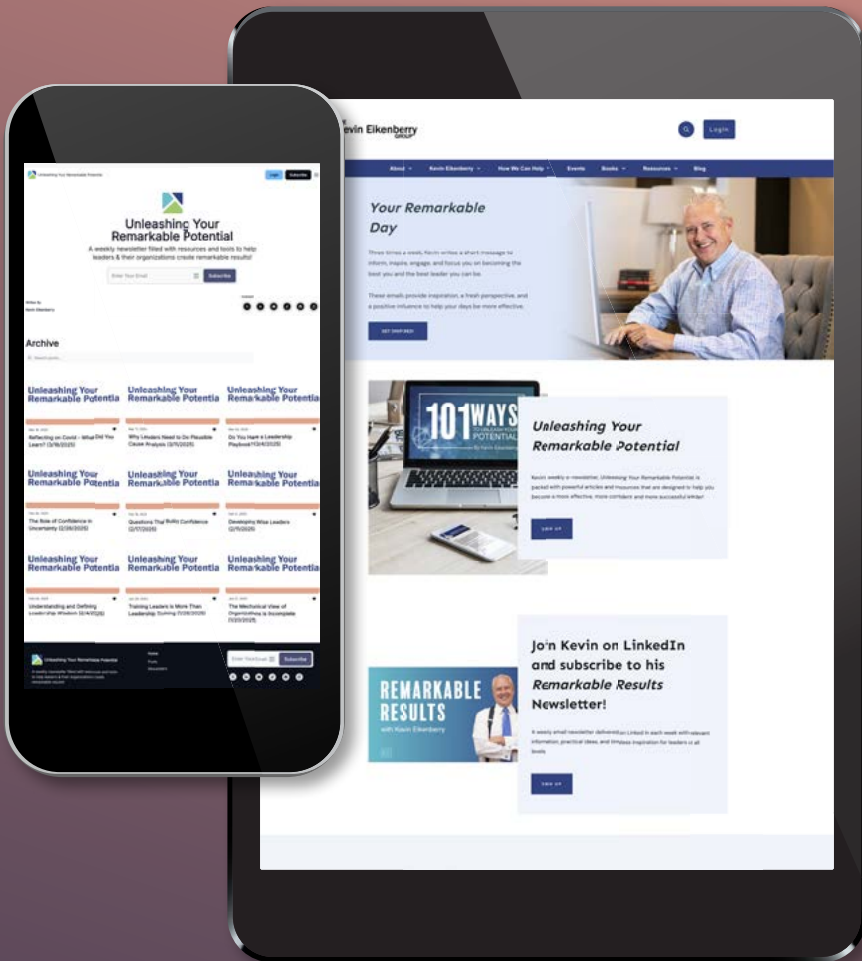
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