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The Support/Challenge Matrix (Blakey & Day, 2012)

The Support/Challenge Matrix helps leaders understand how to develop others through coaching, by balancing two powerful behaviours:

- **Support** – empathy, belief in potential, encouragement (green preference)
- **Challenge** – stretch, honest feedback, holding to account (red preference)

	High Challenge	**Low Challenge**
High Support	**Coaching** "I believe in you and I'll stretch you." Growth zone – support fuels risk-taking.	**Nurturing** "I'll protect you from discomfort." Comfort zone – can lead to dependency.
Low Support	**Dominating** "Get it done, or else." Fear zone – threat without safety.	**Neglectful** "You're on your own." Stagnation – no growth or connection.

Why This Matters for Purpose-Driven Leaders

- Coaching is not just kindness – it's creating the conditions for growth.
- Purpose without challenge stays in the comfort zone.
- Vision without support risks burnout or disengagement.

Coaching Leaders Ask Themselves:

- Am I showing up with both belief and honesty?
- What's the growth edge for this person – and how can I walk beside them as they reach for it?