



Adaptive Leadership Comprehensive Community Approach

Community Foundations Leadership Framework

The community foundation is a community partner that creates a better future for all by *pursuing the community's greatest opportunities and addressing the most critical challenges*, inclusively uniting people, institutions and resources from throughout the community, and producing significant, widely shared and lasting results.

Community Foundations Leadership Framework

Four preconditions to successfully exercise leadership:

- » *Values, culture and will* – built on community-focused results oriented approaches and **willingness to take risk**.
- » *Credibility* – built on inclusive, persistent relationship building.
- » *Resources* – staffing, information & communications systems, networks, and a revenue model.
- » *Understanding and skills* – to recognize and act on trends and policy changes with cultural competency.

Comprehensive Community Development

- Achieving prosperity requires a vision for change ***which goes beyond solving problems*** across the interplay of governmental, commercial, and mission-based activities.
- Community developed ***visions for change that help solve complex problems*** are only solved by cross-sector strategy — the mutually reinforcing activities collective impact.
- Comprehensive community development is collective impact that builds on the strengths and potential of all parts of a community from empowered individuals to entire sectors.

Comprehensive Community Development



Adaptive Leadership Defined

- Adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive. The concept of thriving is drawn from evolutionary biology.
- Successful adaptations enable a living system to take the best from its history into the future. Adaptive leadership is specifically about change that enables the capacity to thrive.

Purpose and Possibility

- The challenges that communities face as they position for long-term success are not technical problems with engineered fixes.
- They are adaptive challenges stemming from the interaction of interrelated trends—demographic, economic, social, political, and technological—playing out on the local, national, and global stages.
- Leadership is a practice not a role. Exercising leadership is difficult, risky, politically contentious, and personally gut-wrenching.

Leadership ON THE Line

Staying Alive through the
Dangers of Leading

Ronald A. Heifetz
Marty Linsky

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The Practice of **ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP**

TOOLS
AND TACTICS
*for Changing
Your Organization
and the World*

RONALD HEIFETZ | ALEXANDER GRASHOW | MARTY LINSKY

Purpose and Possibility

“Leading Boldly” Stanford Social Review, 2004

- Community foundation’s role in social change.
- Moving from authority to leadership, producing greater impact.
- Adaptive problems are difficult to define, have many stakeholders hold a piece of the solution.
- Mobilizing people to clarify what matters most, in what balance, and what trade-offs and defusing conflicts.

Adaptive Leadership Characteristics

- Ecosystem approach
- Adaptive changes build on the past rather than jettison it.
- Adaptation occurs through experimentation.
- Adaptation relies on diversity.
- New adaptations displace, reregulate, and rearrange.
- Adaptation takes time.

Diagnose the System

- *Diagnose Adaptive from Technical Challenges*
- *Diagnose the Political Landscape*
 - Uncovering loyalties and alliances
 - Recognize others' values motivating actions
 - Assess the losses and risks with potential actions
- *Qualities of an Adaptive Organization (State)*
 - Name elephants in the room
 - Responsibility for the future is shared
 - Independent judgment is expected
 - Leadership capacity is developed
 - Continuous learning is practiced

Diagnose Adaptive Challenges from Technical Challenges

1. ***No Known Solution***: There is a gap between the reality and aspiration and you don't have the skills or knowledge to close.
2. ***People Would Rather Avoid the Issue***: Balancing two ideas is not possible; working on the challenge creates tension and conflict.
3. ***Reason and Logic Alone Won't Get You There***: There are competing values at play or there is a gap between what people say and what they do.

Diagnose Adaptive Challenges from Technical Challenges

4. ***Recurring Problem***: Challenge reappears after fix is applied.
5. ***Emotional Response***: Working on this challenge makes people feel uncomfortable; they experience an emotional response such as a feeling in their gut or a knot in a muscle.
6. ***Failure to Resolve Competing Priorities***: You are being asked to do more with less instead of making tough trade offs.

Diagnose Adaptive Challenges from Technical Challenges

- 7. *Moving Forward Feels Risky*:** Making progress on this challenge means putting your reputation, relationship, and job at risk.
- 8. *Casualties*:** To move forward, some people may be left behind.
- 9. *People Must Work Across Boundaries*:** No one person or group can fix the problem alone.
- 10. *Progress Is Not Linear*:** No direct path to get to a better outcome; trial and error is necessary.

Diagnose Adaptive Challenges from Technical Challenges

Kind of Work	Problem & Solution Definition	Locus of Work	Type of Work
TECHNICAL e.g. Broken Arm	CLEAR Set & cast arm	AUTHORITY Doctor	OPTIMIZE EXECUTION Set and cast arm as efficiently and comfortably as possible
TECHNICAL & ADAPTIVE	↑	↑	↑
ADAPTIVE e.g. Elderly parents	REQUIRES LEARNING Loss of independence: learning new ways of living	STAKEHOLDERS Multiple stakeholders: family members, friends, doctors	EXPERIMENTS & SMART RISKS e.g. Experiment with small changes—start with not driving at night

Mobilize the System

- *Make Interpretations*
 - *Think adaptive first not technical*
 - *Systemic rather than individual*
 - *Engage with conflict created*
- *Design Effective Interventions*
 - *Thoughtful framing*
 - *Appeal to individual values*
 - *Listen well, embrace resistance, do not settle for avoidance*

Mobilize the System

- *Act Politically*
 - *You will always have allies and adversaries*
 - *Manage factions*
 - *Engage voices of dissent*
- *Orchestrate Conflict*
 - *Conflict is an essential resource toward change*
- *Build an Adaptive Culture*
 - *Model adaptive leadership*

See Yourself as a System

You are a system as complex as the one you are trying to move forward.

- MARTY LINSKY

- *Identify Your Loyalties*
 - *Workplace*
 - *Community*
 - *Ancestors*
- *Know Your Tuning (Enneagram)*
- *Broaden Your Bandwidth*
 - *Dancing on the edge of your authorizing environment*
- *Understand Your Roles*

Deploy Yourself

- Stay Connected to Your Purposes
 - Personal Goals
 - Common Pitfalls (Martyrdom, Self-Righteousness)
- Engage Courageously
 - Everyone feels incompetent
 - Everyone makes mistakes
- Inspire People
 - Listen with compassion
 - Heartfelt talk

Deploy Yourself

- Run Experiments
 - Exceed your authority
 - Turn up the heat
 - Name your piece of the mess
 - Display your own incompetence
- Thrive (Maintain Leadership Abilities)
 - Maintain personal networks
 - Identify confidants
 - Life is not work
 - Optimism for the future

Deploy Yourself: Crucial Conversations

3. Diagnostic Inquiry

(What's behind the conflict?)

- What is most important to the person?
- What losses are they trying to protect themselves against?
- How do they see you as part of the problem?
- What is their understanding of what you're looking for?

4. Adaptive Ask

(What specific action do you want from them?)

Make an "ask". Examples:

- Trading off a second-order priority in order to get more of a first-order one
- Putting themselves or their issue at risk
- Taking a loss, e.g. getting reassigned to another project, using resources for something other than what they planned
- Changing their behavior with another employee

1. Role Setting

(Who am I in this conversation?)

- What "hat" am I wearing, e.g. co-worker, committee liaison, subordinate, confidant, etc.?
- Initial framing to get the person's attention

2. Confronting Conflict

(What is the conflict about?)

- Express a point-of-view, position, problem, concern or wish and elicit the opposing perspective
- Clarify what the conflict is that's standing in the way

Discussion Questions

- What are some of the most adaptive organizations, communities or people you have seen or read about?
- In your view, what makes them adaptive?
- What types of resistance to change have you seen in yourself or in others? Why do you think that people want to maintain the status quo?
- Think of when you experienced a change initiative in your past. What pain, distress or conflict did you witness or experience during the change process?