

Leadership for Learning

Tool #1: Leadership Descriptions

The 3 R's: Basic elements to any organization –
Resources Results Relationships

The Hero: A default model of leadership in our
culture

Community is built by
focusing on people's gifts
rather than their
deficiencies.

Peter Block. *Community: The Structure
of Belonging*. San Francisco: Berrett-
Koehler, 2008, p.12.

Leadership: An alternative description

Leadership is the capacity to cultivate shared urgency by mobilizing resources, results and relationships to make further progress toward the organization's adaptive and technical challenges.

Tool #2: Challenge Distinctions

Leading others through difficult but necessary growth and change is complex work, especially because it requires people to act *together* in order to make progress. In other words, it requires collaborative learning. This transformative process is often anxious or fearful work because it necessitates that people give up comfortable habits of thinking and behaving for an unknown, but promising future. Ron Heifetz calls this "adaptive" change. Successful leadership requires the discernment between adaptive and "technical" challenges and the provision of structure, support to meet the challenge.

Adaptive challenges have no known, ready or easily accessible solutions. Work on adaptive challenges requires research, creativity and experimentation. In other words, it requires learning. Learning must be a valued part of the process as solutions are explored collaboratively in murky, uncharted territory. Failure and ambiguity are accepted aspects of the process.

Technical problems can be addressed with evident solutions using "tried and true" methods, current knowledge and familiar processes. Leaders can address these problems effectively using an efficient, logical A-to-B process. Most significant issues are not technical problems.

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Tool #3: Ministry Politics Chart

- Power - Capacity to act or influence
- Interests - Goals, values, expectations, predispositions that lead a person to act in one direction or another
- Negotiation - to confer, bargain, or discuss to reaching agreement with others

Meetings are political because the people gathered will have different power and differing interests and, therefore, a need to negotiate. They are all stakeholders, with something to gain or to lose based on the decisions made at the meetings. The decisions made at a meeting will most likely impact other stakeholders not present. Therefore, those at the meeting should carefully name what is at stake and who all the stakeholders are and whether or not they are all represented at the planning table.

Four Cells of Human Response to Power and Interest Differences

<u>Interests</u>	<u>Power Relations</u>	
	Equal - Symmetrical	Unequal - Asymmetrical
Consensual - Same	1. Problem Solve	2. Network
Conflictual - Different	3. Bargain	4. What are the possibilities? <i>Suffer, Submit, Subvert, Counteract</i> What does faithfulness look like here? -- for the one with more power? -- for the one with less power?

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Tool #4: Meetings-Worth-Attending Goal & Agenda

The quality of meetings impacts the whole org. --resources, relationships & results.

Meetings should serve the organization by

- exploring understandings of the current adaptive challenges
- enhancing collaboration of all involved
- focusing on process, deciding the next steps forward on the big challenges
- building relationships, strengthening communication and trust
- evaluating resources and results

The PAUSED Meeting Agenda

- Prepare – Before the meeting, all are reminded to pray, and all understand the agenda, the goals for the meeting, their role, and what/how to prepare for the meeting.
- Affirm relationships – The meeting begins with face-to-face affirmations, building the next step of trust and support for healthy teamwork.
- Understand interests -- of all stakeholders, even those not present. Name the various issues that are at stake for those who will be impacted by the results of the meeting. Voice representation of various interests.
- Search for creative solutions – brainstorming *without* judgment or evaluation
- Evaluate options -- objectively & reasonably in light of the mission
- Decide what happens next -- plan action steps & set next goals

Adapted from PeaceMakers Ministries www.peacemaker.net

Tool #5: A Learning Theory for Planning and Evaluating

For learning to take place, three factors must be held in healthy *tension*: **support, structure, and challenge**. If any one area is either too weak or too strong, learning will not take place and healthy progress will not be made. For example, an overemphasis on structure makes the learning climate inflexible, limiting creativity needed to address adaptive challenges. If support is overly stressed, the climate can become smothering and enmeshed. If challenge dominates, the learner may become performance-driven or discouraged. Therefore, leadership for rallying people through adaptive challenges and learning must hold these three aspects of the environment in healthy tension.

Structure provides the physical and sequential organizing rationale of resources and relationships for the process of learning; including communication patterns, plans, dates, criteria, and goals.

Support comprises the emotional and relational environment for learning; one that is non-threatening, guiding, hopeful, collaborative, forgiving, sustaining, and empowering.

Challenge involves the call and expectation to change in abilities and in habits of mind, and to grow and learn, through the meaningful engagement of authentic tasks of intrinsic value.