

Overcome Your Fears Create Alliances

March 25, 2010

Session 2—Breakout B (12:30 pm to 1:30 pm)

For the

ARMA Salt Lake 2010 Seminar

Salt Lake Community College
Larry Miller Campus
9750 South 300 West
Sandy, Utah 84070-3264

Facilitation by

Ken Embley

University of Utah
Center for Public Policy & Administration
260 South Central Campus Drive, Room 210E
Salt Lake City, Utah 84112-9154
Direct phone: (801) 581-7261
ken.embley@cpga.utah.edu

Table of Contents

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Page</i>
Table of Contents	2
Overview	3
• Basic Premise.....	3
• Objectives	3
• Acknowledgements.....	3
Identify the Challenge.....	4—5
• Problem or Challenge Statement	4
• Exercise 1—Problem or Challenge Statement.....	4
• Distinguish Technical from Adaptive Challenges	5
Leadership.....	6—8
• Adaptive Leadership	6
• Get on the Balcony.....	7
• Find out Where People are Coming From	7
• Create Alliances	8
• Give the Work Back.....	8
Practical Application Exercise	9
Summary	10
Fact Sheet—Center for Public Policy & Administration, the University of Utah.....	11

Overview

Basic Premise

The *basic premise* (from an ARMA publication)—is many in the field of records are more comfortable in the backroom, organizing and filing records. To be a more successful records and information manager, however, we have to be more gregarious. We have to create alliances to sell our program to management and to other departments and often, just to keep our job. We think there is a fear factor involved, possibly a fear of speaking to people, a fear of tooting our own horn, a fear of leadership.

Objectives

The *objectives*—are to provide an opportunity to develop skills to overcome fears, to become more outgoing, to increase confidence in self, and to become a better leader.

Acknowledgements

This document outlines some basic adaptive leadership concepts. These concepts are primarily from the following source materials.

- *Leadership on the Line: Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading* by Ronald A Heifetz and Marty Linsky, a Harvard Business School Press publication, Boston, Massachusetts, copyright 2002, and the ISBN is 1-57851-437-1.
- *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership* by Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow and Marty Linsky, a Harvard Business School Press publication, Boston Massachusetts, copyright 2009 Cambridge Leadership Associates, and the ISBN is 978-1-4221-0576-4.

Notes: _____

Identify the Challenge

Problem or Challenge Statement

A problem or challenge statement is a description of the challenge such that there is a clear and concise understanding of the ***current condition***, the ***pain*** associated with the current condition, and a clear and concise understanding of the ***desired condition***.

For example, a community leader might describe a neighborhood traffic challenge as—currently, automobile traffic speeds through our neighborhood, endangering residents and disrupting the quality of life. The desired condition is to reduce the volume of automobile traffic, and that traffic travels at a safe speed and in a manner to supports quality residential life.

Notes: _____

Exercise 1—Problem or Challenge Statement

Directions—are to identify a ***current condition***, the associated ***pain*** and a ***desired condition*** for challenge you have or might experience in your world of work.

Name the challenge: _____

Current condition: _____

Pain: _____

Desired condition: _____

A *point of emphasis*—the reason to write a problem or challenge statement is to ensure a clear and concise understanding of the challenge.

Notes: _____

Distinguish Technical from Adaptive Challenges

A ***technical challenge***—you will know you have a technical challenge when you can fix it with existing policies, procedures or programs.

An ***adaptive challenge***—you know you have an adaptive challenge when the resolution is via people’s hearts and minds, and understanding a need to change. An adaptive challenge requires experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments. Without learning new ways—changing attitudes, values, and behaviors—people cannot make the adaptive leap necessary to thrive in the new environment.

Notes: _____

Remember our objectives—are to provide an opportunity to develop skills to overcome fears, to become more outgoing, to increase confidence in self, and to become a better leader.

The ***assumption*** is—when we have a ***technical challenge***—we have few fears, we are outgoing, we have confidence in self and problems get solved. However—when we have an ***adaptive challenge***—sometime fear come into play, we find it easy to retreat, we lose confidence and at times, we find it difficult to be a leader.

Discussion box—is this assumption a fair assumption?

Leadership

It takes leadership to resolve tough issues. You may or may not be in a formal position of leadership, but when a tough issue is demanding attention; frequently, the best approach is to be that of an informal and adaptive leader. One can explore effective means to address and resolve issues from the perspective of ***adaptive leadership*** by ***getting on the balcony***, by ***finding out where people are coming from***, by ***creating alliances*** and then by ***giving the work back***.

Notes: _____

Adaptive Leadership

As Ronald Heifetz teaches it—leadership is not about wielding power and authority. It is about mobilizing people to make progress on the tough, adaptive challenges that make or break organizations. It is about being able to both see the bigger picture and make decisions under fire. Moreover, contrary to popular notions about the importance of charisma, leadership is not about personality, but presence, ***the capacity to foster collective action to resolve pressing issues***.

The hope of leadership lies in the capacity to deliver disturbing news and raise difficult questions in a way that people can absorb—prodding them to take up the message rather than ignore it or kill the messenger.

Adaptive challenges require experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments from numerous places in the organization. Without learning new ways—changing attitudes, values, and behaviors—people cannot make the adaptive leap necessary to thrive in the new environment.

Discussion box—is to identify examples of adaptive leadership challenges in your world of work.

Notes: _____

Get on the Balcony

Get on the balcony—is a *metaphor for gaining perspective in the midst of action*. We all get swept up in the action, particularly when it becomes intense or personal and what we need most is to pause. Self-reflection does not come naturally. Most people instinctively follow a dominate trend in an organization, without critical evaluation of its merits. The herd instinct is strong, ready to stampede and trample those who do not keep pace. The herd instinct makes it hard to see another direction, at least until the dust settles.

Getting on the balcony is to get beyond your own blind spots—to find out what is really going on. It requires standing back and watching even as you take part in the action being observed. When you observe from the balcony, you must see yourself as the other participants see you.

Notes: _____

Find out Where People are Coming From

Find out where people are coming from—is to be *empathic*. Getting people in an organization to address a deeply felt issue is difficult and risky. If people have avoided a problem for a long time, it should not be surprising that they try to silence you when you push them to face the problem. Both your survival and your success depend on your skill at reaching a true understanding of the varying perspectives among the factions (learn about their stakes and fears).

Lincoln’s abhorrence of hurting another was born of more than simple compassion. He possessed extraordinary empathy—the gift... of putting himself in the place of another, to experience what they were feeling, to understand their motives and desires.

Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals*, page 104

Notes: _____

Create Alliances

Create alliances—means to find partners or to build coalitions. Partners provide protection, and they create coalitions for you with factions other than your own. Alliances strengthen both you and your initiatives. With alliances, you are not simply relying on the logical power of your arguments and evidence; you are building political power as well.

Notes: _____

Give the Work Back

Give the work back—is to stay alive in the practice of leadership by reducing the extent to which you become the target of people’s frustrations. The best way to stay out of range is to think constantly about **giving the work back to the people who need to take responsibility**. Place the work within and between the factions who are faced with the challenge.

Specifically then, giving the work back—is the action you take to resist the pressure to take the responsibility for solving problems off of other people’s shoulders, and instead mobilizing the responsibility of the primary stakeholders in doing their share of the work.

Notes: _____

Practical Application Exercise

Directions—are to devise a scenario to demonstrate application of the adaptive leadership concepts found in *Overcome Your Fears—Create Alliances*.

Describe your adaptive leadership challenge: _____

What do you see from the balcony? _____

Where are people coming from? _____

What do you do to create alliances? _____

What can you do to give the work back? _____

Summary

The *objectives*—are to provide an opportunity to develop skills to overcome fears, to become more outgoing, to increase confidence in self, and to become a better leader.

- *Distinguish technical from adaptive challenges*—where a technical challenge resolution is via existing policies, procedures and programs but an adaptive challenge resolution is via people’s hearts and minds, and understanding a need to change.
- *Adaptive leadership*—is not about wielding power and authority. *It is about mobilizing people to make progress on the tough, adaptive challenges that make or break organizations.* It is about being able to both see the bigger picture and make decisions under fire. Moreover, *contrary to popular notions about the importance of charisma, leadership is not about personality, but presence, the capacity to foster collective action to resolve pressing issues.*
- *Get on the balcony*—is a metaphor for gaining perspective in the midst of action.
- *Find out where people are coming from*—is to be empathic.
- *Create alliances*—means to find partners or to build coalitions.
- *Give the work back*—is mobilizing the responsibility of the primary stakeholders in doing their share of the work.

Notes: _____

CPPA provides research, education and services to public and nonprofit organizations that will strengthen administration, leadership and public policy making.

Center Information

The Center for Public Policy & Administration is a member of the Institute for Public and International Affairs, housed within the College of Social and Behavioral Science at the University of Utah.

Through our academic, research, and practitioner connections, CPPA has the unique ability to address public policy and administration from concept to application.

Offerings:

- **Master of Public Administration (MPA) Degree**
- **Master of Public Policy (MPP) Degree**
- **Master of Science in International Affairs and Global Enterprise (MIAGE) Degree**
- **Policy Research**
- **Program Evaluation and Consulting**
- **Training for Public Officials and Employees**
- **Leadership and Executive Development**

Contacts:

Steven Ott, Center Director
Ken Embley, Outreach Director

Sample Projects and Services:

Utah Attorney General's Office

Provide leadership, management and organizational development services, including assessments, training and development, performance management methodologies and programs and facilitation.

Westside Leadership Institute

Support the development of west side resident leaders as a catalyst for positive change in their communities.

In-depth Policy Reports

Provides in-depth reports on critical policy issues to assist policy makers in their decision making.

Policy Perspectives

This electronic journal, written by both CPPA staff and affiliated experts, presents different perspectives on current policy issues.

Utah Certified Public Manager Program

Provides tools to increase the professional performance of current and future government managers.

Utah Municipal Clerks Institute and Academy

Provide for the training needs of this group of critically important municipal officers.

Utah Intergovernmental Roundtable

Administration of UIR to facilitate discussion and promote understanding of intergovernmental issues.

www.cppa.utah.edu

260 So. Central Campus Drive, #214
Salt Lake City, Utah 84112
801-581-6781