Adaptive Leadership
The Easy Way to Make Hard Decisions!

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How high can you go?

Trophy Contest Rules

- **STEP 1:** You have to draw an *exact* design of your trophy on the paper we will give you.

- **YOUR TROPHY HAS TO UTILIZE:**
  - 2 WHITE CUPS
  - 4 RED CUPS
  - 1 SET OF CHOPSTICKS
  - 1 MEDAL

- The only discretionary item is the paper from the chopsticks. You can, but don’t have to use this paper.
Trophy building guidelines

HOWEVER, you will only have the following to draw your design:

1 white cup
1 red cup
1 set of chopsticks
1 medal

You will have 10 minutes to draw your design. We will then give you the additional 1 white cup and 3 red cups to make The trophy!
RULES:

The trophy can be built on a table, the floor, a chair or any other stationary prop.

The trophy does not have to be moved, but it does have to stand long enough to be measured.

The trophy will be measured from the top of all of the pieces to the bottom. (The table or chair does NOT count in the measurement.)

How do you win/succeed?
20 points for the tallest trophy
15 for the second tallest trophy
10 for the third tallest trophy
-15 points if your trophy is not exactly like your diagram
Follow-up questions

Did you help with the project?

Did you give directions?

Did a leader emerge? If not, did you all work together to solve this problem? (Adaptive)

Were there clarifying roles? (Help with a confident attitude, help everyone stay focused)

Was there conflict?

Did you challenge existing thoughts?

What were the norms?

How was the communication?
Traditional Problem Solving

Ecosystem ➔ Problems ➔ Actions ➔ Solutions
Evolved Problem Solving

Growth Requires Change

Ecosystem → Problems → Actions → Solutions
Evolved Problem Solving

Growth requires Change

Ecosystem → Problems → Actions → Solutions
Evolved Problem Solving

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Growth requires Change → Ecosystem → Problems → Actions → Solutions
Evolved Problem Solving

Growth requires Change → Ecosystem → Problems → Actions → Solutions
Evolved Problem Solving

The Adaptive Challenge

Growth requires Change

Ecosystem → Problems → Actions → Solutions
The Adaptive Challenge

**Adaptive Challenges** - Those that require new learning (and leadership), where

**Technical Challenges** - Can be solved with existing technical skill or expertise.

Adaptive challenges require all stakeholders, thus, at some point, it requires Adaptive Leadership.
Adaptive Leadership

“Adaptive Leadership focuses on the need for change within organizations and encourages actions that disrupt the status-quo in order to incite forward momentum”

-Ron Heifetz
Coauthor of *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*
Basic Assumptions of Adaptive Leadership

- Involves change that allows the organization to thrive
- Builds on the past, instead of dumping it
- Requires experimentation
- Relies on diverse perspectives
- The old structure and culture may radically change
- Adaptive change takes time
Preconditions for Adaptive Leadership

- **Get rid of the “Broken Systems” Illusion**
  - There is no such thing as a broken system.
  - Systems are designed to produce a result
  - Adaptive Leadership requires different results
  - Different results require a new, improved, or different system
Preconditions for Adaptive Leadership

- Get rid of the “Broken Systems” Illusion
- **Distinguish between technical problems and adaptive challenges**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Problem Definition</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Locus of Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical and Adaptive</td>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Requires Learning</td>
<td>Authority and Stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive</td>
<td>Requires Learning</td>
<td>Requires Learning</td>
<td>Stakeholders &gt; Authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preconditions for Adaptive Leadership

- Get rid of the “Broken Systems” Illusion
- Distinguish between Technical Problems and Adaptive Challenges
- **Distinguish between Managing and Leading**
### Management vs. Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
<th>Mode of Operating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction</td>
<td>Define problems and solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>Shield the organization from external threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order:</td>
<td>Restore order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Orientation</td>
<td>Clarify roles and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Managing Conflict</td>
<td>Reduce conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shaping Norms</td>
<td>Maintain current norms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preconditions for Adaptive Leadership

- Get rid of the “Broken Systems” Illusion
- Distinguish between Technical Problems and Adaptive Challenges
- Distinguish between Managing and Leading
- Learn to Live in the “Productive Zone of Equilibrium”
Productive Zone of Equilibrium
Preconditions for Adaptive Leadership

- Get rid of the “Broken Systems” Illusion
- Distinguish between Technical Problems and Adaptive Challenges
- Distinguish between Managing and Leading
- Learn to Live in the “Productive Zone of Equilibrium”
- **Observe, Interpret, Intervene (process of Adaptive Leadership)**
The Process of Adaptive Leadership

Adaptive leadership process

- observe
- intervene
- interpret
Preconditions for Adaptive Leadership

- Get rid of the “Broken Systems” Illusion
- Distinguish between Technical Problems and Adaptive Challenges
- Distinguish between Managing and Leading
- Learn to live in the Productive Zone of Equilibrium
- Observe, Interpret, Intervene (process of Adaptive Leadership)
- Engage above (learning) and below (doing) the neck
Preconditions for Adaptive Leadership

- Get rid of the “Broken Systems” Illusion
- Distinguish Between Technical Problems and Adaptive Challenges
- Distinguish between Managing and Leading
- Learn to Live in the “Productive Zone of Equilibrium”
- Observe, Interpret, Intervene (process of Adaptive Leadership)
- Engage Above *(learning)* and Below *(doing)* the Neck
- **Connect to Purpose**
What’s Your Culture?

1. IF OUR COMPANY/DIVISION WAS AN ANIMAL, IT WOULD BE A ______________ BECAUSE ____________.

2. IF OUR COMPANY/DIVISION WAS A FOOD, IT WOULD BE ________________ BECAUSE ____________.

3. IF OUR COMPANY/DIVISION WAS A PLACE, IT WOULD BE ___________ BECAUSE ____________________.

4. IF OUR COMPANY/DIVISION WAS A SEASON, IT WOULD BE ___________ BECAUSE ____________________.

5. IF OUR COMPANY/DIVISION WAS A TV SHOW OR MOVIE, IT WOULD BE ________________ BECAUSE ____________.
Is your culture ADAPTIVE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>TV Show</th>
<th>Season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rabbit</td>
<td>Big Mac</td>
<td>Casino</td>
<td>48 Hrs. (movie)</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>Taco</td>
<td>Racetrack</td>
<td>Miami Vice</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Elephant</td>
<td>Ribs</td>
<td>Circus</td>
<td>Roseanne</td>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Eagle</td>
<td>Big Mac</td>
<td>Las Vegas</td>
<td>CNN</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Panther</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>New York</td>
<td>LA Law</td>
<td>Racing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thoughts about culture...

All of these groups reported to one person.

This group was going through a lot of change. Hence the season “spring” was seen often!

Can too much change be too much?

What is positive about these cultures? What is negative?

Columns tells us about the company. Rows tell us about the group.
Questions
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