

Adaptive Leadership

A Key Driver of Implementation

Introductions

And Welcome!

Objectives and Agenda

- We want you to know more about adaptive leadership as a key driver to implement change
- We would like to provide an overview of how we did this in Wisconsin
- We will share some of the data that supports our belief that adaptive leadership is critical to changing a system.

What is adaptive leadership?

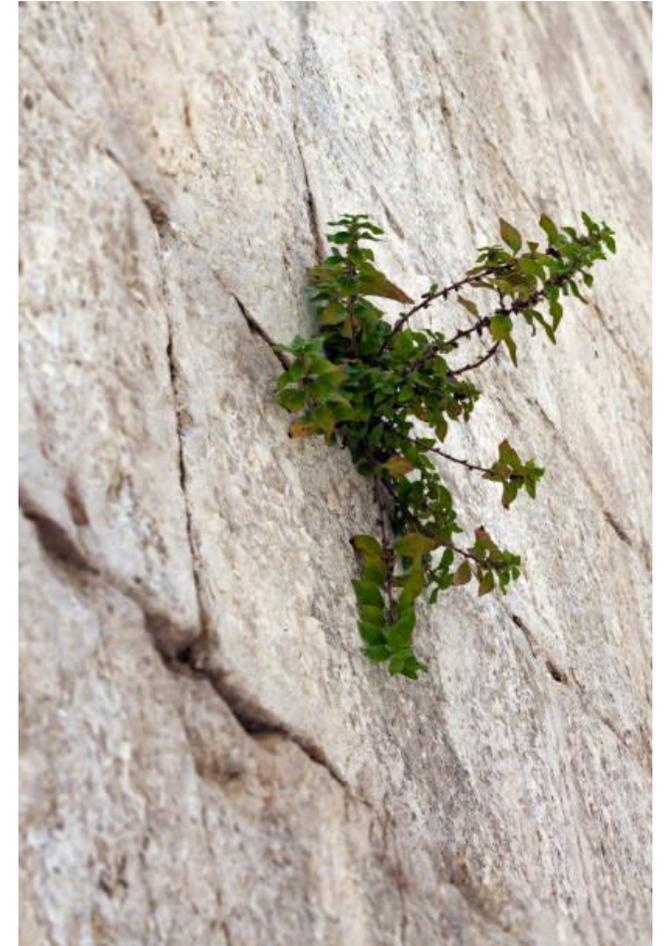
And why is it important?

“It is in the collective intelligence of people at all levels, who need to use one another as resources, often across boundaries and learn their way to solutions.”



Heifetz, R. And Laurie, D. (1998) The Work of Leadership. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review

- Adaptive Leadership addresses *complex* and *transformative* change.
- It is based on the principle of *shared responsibility* for our future success (risks, resources, decision-making and successes).
- Assumes that much of the way we do things reflects an *adaptation to circumstances or environment*.
- To adapt, we must develop capacity to meet problems according to *value and purpose*.
- Skills that made us successful become less relevant or must be *reframed* or retooled





- Understanding the problem is clear and routine;
- Perspectives are aligned – all see the problem similarly;
- Solution and implementation of the problem is clear;
- Primary locus of responsibility for organizing the work – the identified leader

- Definition of the problem (or cause) is unclear
- Solution and implementation is unclear and requires innovation and learning
- Legitimate, yet competing, perspectives emerge. People see the situation in different ways
- Primary locus of responsibility is shared



**To differentiate
between Adaptive and
Technical Work go back
to your answer this
morning...**



Does making progress on this problem require changes in people's values, attitudes and/or habits of behavior?

Where do you get stuck?

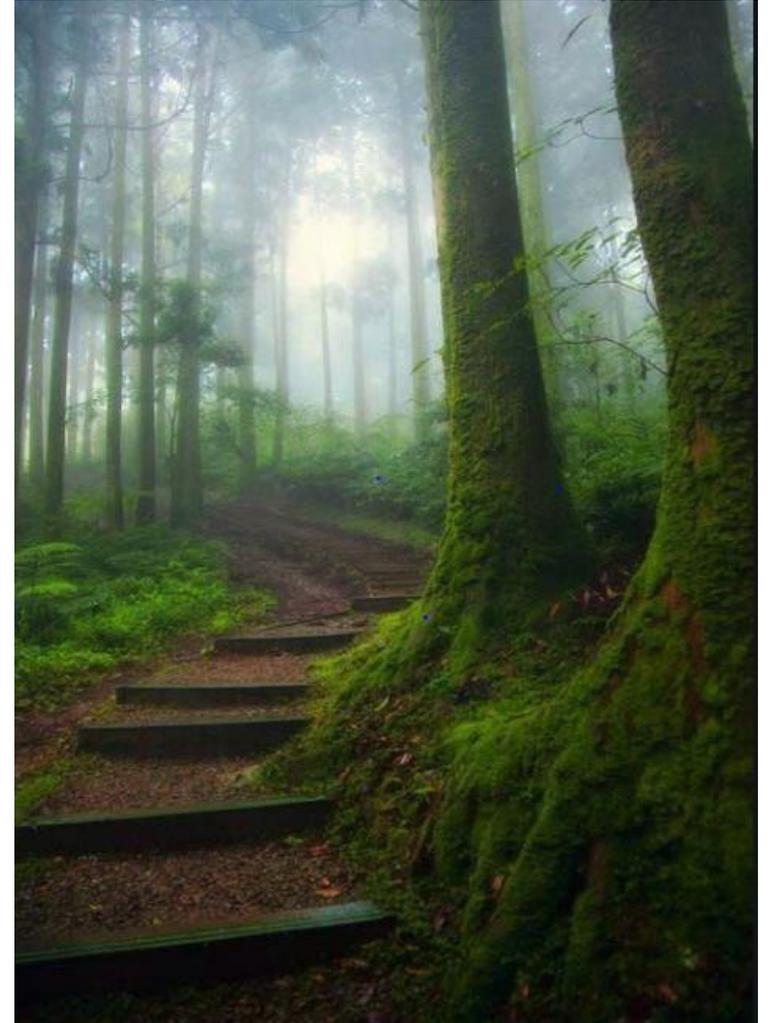


- Get on the Balcony
- Identify the nature of the work: what requires an adaptive response? Technical?
- Support a holding environment
- Give work to others
- Engage all voices
- Regulate distress
- Maintain disciplined attention
- Stay in the work

Heifetz, R. (1994) Leadership without Easy Answers,
Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press

Second: The Wisconsin AWARE Experience

- You invested in me as a leader. I was equipped to lead and mobilize others to create changes in culture and practice.
- I took my team out “to the woods” to think adaptively.
- Leadership is *not* identifying multiple programs and inserting them into a work culture that is unprepared for change.
- “What do people stand to lose?” respect for the process of transformation.
- Things changed.



Mirroring at the state

- Action as “disciplined experiments” in an iterative process of trying something, seeing how it goes, learning from what happens, and trying something else (balcony to dance floor, repeat)
- The art of facilitation, especially when conflict arises, must be practiced and supported. (the holding environment)
- Adaptive shift from “train and hope” to implementation science – one leader’s story
- Diagnosing the political landscape – another leader’s story



Third: What did the data show?

- The Adaptive Leadership Approach served as a roadmap to change management.
- Distinguishing between adaptive and technical work was critical.
- Informants reported an increase in skills in key relevant areas of AWARE work.
- Self assessments, reflection and follow up dialogue helped participants gain a better understanding of their leadership.
- Informants were more thoughtful about engaging others in the work, which made a big difference.

Lessons learned

- Much of AWARE work is about managing change. The big shifts in the change process were recognized as adaptive.
- Leadership support is most helpful if offered at the beginning of an initiative. Coaching on a regular basis allows for staying in the adaptive frame.
- Creating safe space for leadership development is critical to the experience.
- There are benefits to participating in leadership development as a team.

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- “Some of the challenges people faced were along the lines of change management. So, making sure that you create the why, you communicate the why, and then providing support for people to get the knowledge and skills that they need to be able to engage. I think that was a challenge.”



- “So we piloted this process...We would send folks in to meet with the teacher, talk about it a little bit more, figure out what kind of intervention we were looking to make. But, without all the adaptive work, we never would have understood how to build the electronic referral tool.”

A few more:

- “So, we're clear on the values and where we're going...part of the why and what it looks like. And helping people to align, assimilate, or learn from that as we shift and shape those things... I'm glad I participated in this process.”
- “I think it just made me stop and think about how I approach different people...I think it just kind of made me think deeper into how I lead people and how I bring them along.”





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*Thank
You for
Your time
and
attention!*