Connected Leadership for a Complex World

Presented by

Kevin Liu and Vidula Bal
Connected Leadership

The Shift from Contained to Connected
Basic Ideas of Connected Leadership

- Effective leadership in organizations today requires more than selecting and developing a critical mass of individuals possessing specified competences.
- It also requires the development of leadership as a property of whole systems.
Definition of Leadership

The collective ability of organizational members to

set direction,

gain commitment, and

create alignment.
A Shift in Language

- Contained
- Self
- Leader
- Collective
- Connected
- Leadership

Diagram:

- Contained
- Self
- Leader
- Collective
- Connected
- Leadership
A Leadership Framework

Within

Leader Development

Connection Development

Between

Individual

Team & Organization Development

Collective
Complex Challenge

- A gap between the current reality and a desired future state
- Impacting individuals, teams, organizations or communities for which there are:
  - No mechanisms for naming
  - No preexisting solutions
  - No organizational expertise
  - No agreement about how/whether to proceed
- That requires fundamental change
## Examples of Complex Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Complex Challenge</th>
<th>Fundamental Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCL</td>
<td>Getting beyond assessment for development, the development of individual leaders</td>
<td>How can we “do” organizational leadership development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Connections between people?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Hospital</td>
<td>Aging population</td>
<td>How do we become a more customer-focused hospital?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased competition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health care industry “emergencies”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The World Community</td>
<td>September 11, 2001</td>
<td>What is leadership in a unilateral world?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Questions for Reflection

1. What complex challenge(s) is your organization currently facing?

2. Of the four images on the screen, which one best captures your challenge?

3. Why?
What are Connections?

Connections are links.

Connections define our lives.

Connections create interdependence.

Connections define what lies “between”
Connections & Leaders

*Connections* are central to overcoming *complex challenges.*

*Leaders* struggle in the face of complex challenges and may not have the *capacity* to succeed alone.

*Connected Leadership* is striving to *bridge the gap.*
Connectivity

- Connectivity is a property of the relationships between individuals, groups, and systems as a whole.
- It is the pattern of implicit and explicit linkages that facilitate (or constrain) collective efficacy in facing the tasks of leadership.
What Lies “Between?”

Negative space is where we are missing a connection.

White space represents opportunity for deeper connection.

Outer space is that which is still unconnected.
Assumptions about Connectivity

- To face adaptive challenges, the complexity of the connections within an organization must be equal to or greater than the complexity of the issue at hand (whether internal or external).
- This complexity is not based solely on the number of connections made (e.g., more individuals sharing information), but also concerned with the types of connections made (e.g., individuals sharing information linked to the current challenge, through various conduits, that addresses contextual implications of acting on that information).
Assumptions about Connectivity

- The development of more complex connections demands **purposeful transformation** of individuals, groups, and whole systems toward higher levels of **differentiation** (uniqueness) and **integration** (relatedness).

- The systems, culture, and practices of connectivity in an organization are critical and **developable** aspects of leadership.
The meaning around shared work is created in the connections.
Connectivity Questions

1. What does connectivity look like in your organization?
   - What is differentiated?
   - What is integrated?

2. Describe the volume and types of connections related to your complex challenge.
Leadership Strategy

- The pattern of explicit and implicit organizational choices
- In areas including information, education, rewards, and control
- That contribute to the organization’s ability to face complex challenges.
Four Organizational Areas

- Information systems
- Education systems
- Reward systems
- Control systems
Questions for Reflection

- To what extent is your organization able to get the right information to the right people in a timely and thorough manner?
- To what extent does your organization support learners?
- To what extent does your organization reward strategically aligned behaviors and connections?
- To what extent does decision making authority “move” in your organization?
Big Picture Question

How do your systems, culture, and practices contribute to the growth of leadership in your organization?
Let’s do some *FAST* consulting!
Rules

- Choose 2 partners.
- Take 4 minutes to describe your complex challenge, the state of connectivity, and the leadership strategy in your organization.
- Then, in the following 2 minutes, your partners WRITE consultative suggestions, probing questions, cautions, words of advice on the NEON stickies and hand them to you.
- Read and re-present those ideas back to your partners (for the purpose of coherence) in the last 1 minute
- Repeat until all 3 have shared.
Leadership Capacity

- The capacity for setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment.

- Capacity is not something to develop in individuals, groups, or organizations per se. Rather, leadership capacity is developed by helping individuals, groups, and organizations change the forms of their relating. More specifically, the forms of relating become more complex, more adaptable, richer, and more inclusive.
Thank you for exploring with us!

Please submit your “discussion questions” at the podium.