Using an Evidence-Based Approach to Develop a Culture of Shared Leadership for Change

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Shared Leadership

An approach for working together in new ways to achieve transformational change

Greater Number of People

Collaboration across the organization

Leader & Follower interchangeable

Shared Leadership

Leadership not based on position

Multiple perspectives and expertise

From: Kezar & Holcombe. 2017. Shared Leadership in Higher Education: Important Lessons from Research and Practice. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

When Shared Leadership is most useful

Type of Change	Description	Shared Leadership
Routine	Challenges addressed by using well-practiced approaches (e.g., changes to policies to reflect easily solved problems)	Not necessary
Strategic	Challenges require planned out approaches (e.g., streamlining processes to remove unnecessary steps – LEAN)	Might be useful
Transformative	Complex challenges that require a significant expansion of individual and institutional capacities and new ways of working together (e.g., improving student success)	Definitely useful!

Shared Governance vs. Shared Leadership

Shared Governance

- institutional Direction
- Decision-making
- Policy setting
- Authority delegated to different groups
- Accountability

Shared Leadership

- Implementation of university-wide goals
- Action across units
- Shared responsibility of institutional priorities
- Measurable progress on mission critical outcomes
- Significant institutional change

Shared Leadership Complexity

Shared Leadership Story - UW-W

Held open forum for RFY project focused on improving first year student success

SL: Greater number of individuals

Led to a "Birds of a Feather" (BoF) meeting of expanded project teams

SL: Multiple perspectives and expertise

New teams formed of various ranks based on shared interests

SL: Leader and follower roles interchangeable

BoF teams were empowered and held accountable but were given permission and authority to act

SL: Leadership is not based on position or formal authority

This created a new nimble leadership structure that was able to respond quickly to identified barriers to student success

SL: Collaboration and interactions across the organization

Shared Leadership Story – Winona State

Leadership Academy designed to build leadership capacity

SL: Greater number of individuals

Institute participants included faculty, staff and students; teams selected a problem

SL: Multiple perspectives and expertise

Teams built based on expertise; leaders drawn from various ranks

SL: Leader and follower roles interchangeable

Teams were empowered and held accountable but were given permission and authority to act

SL: Leadership is not based on position or formal authority

Over time, led to habit of working in cross-institutional teams to solve problems

SL: Collaboration and interactions across the organization

Shared Leadership is *Evidence-Based Leadership*

- Focuses on identification of specific problems that need complex solutions.

- Based on a reflective study of the problem, it identifies, leverages expertise needed to address it.

- Involves a willingness to explore creative, unfamiliar options, is open to new ideas, and includes listening to new voices.

- Provides a supportive environment that encourages experimentation and risk-taking.

- Fosters new patterns of interaction and communication that create capacity to solve complex problems.

The River of Systemic Change
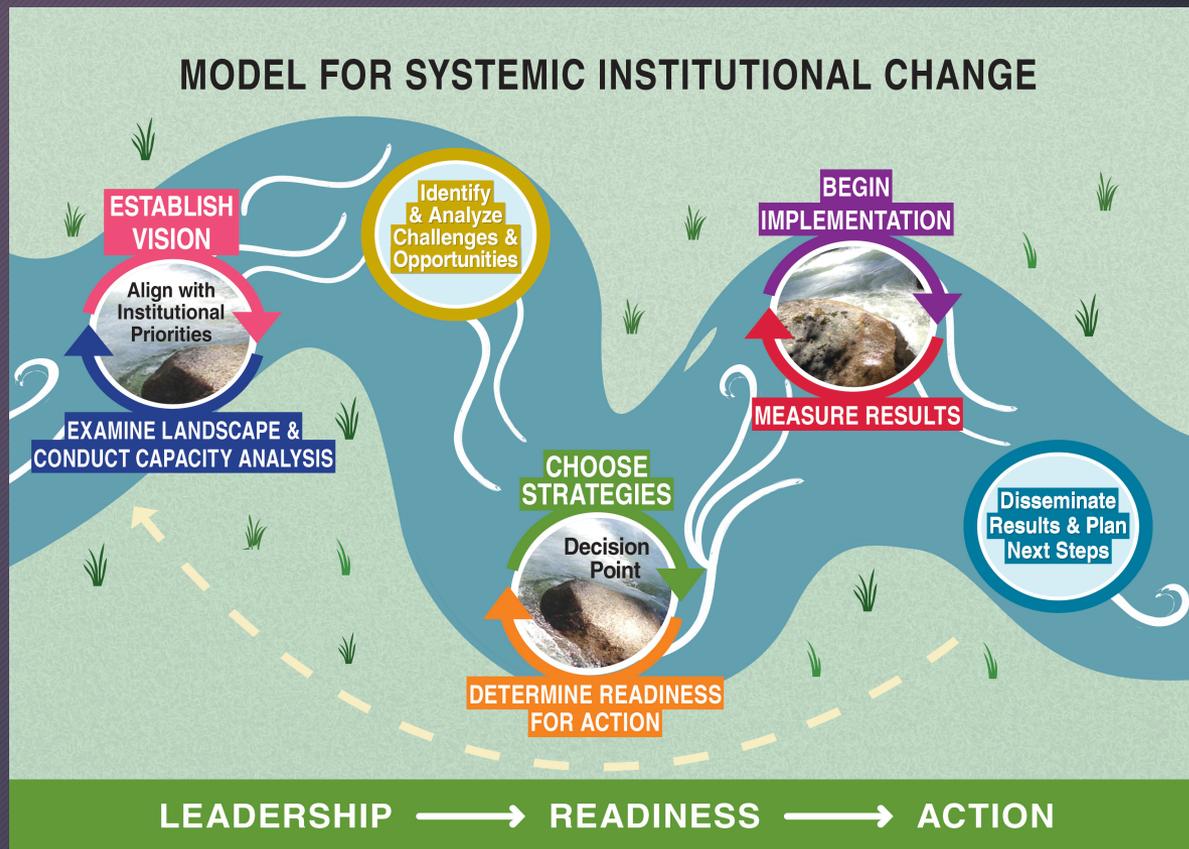
From: Elrod & Kezar. 2016. Increasing Student Success in STEM: A Guide to Systemic Institutional Change. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges & Universities.

Implicit Theories of Change

Implicit Theory:

- We just need to do something!

- If we just had more money or more faculty!

- If we just focus on the department, that will create broader change.

- My passion as a champion is enough to drive change.

- Data will convince everyone of need to change.

- Change is a rational, linear process that occurs step-by-step.

- Change occurs most effectively from either bottom-up OR top-down.

Reality:

- One solution does not fit all.

- You can't change the outcome by just doing more of the same.

- Your departmental program probably depends on many others.

- It takes a village; leader development & succession planning is essential for implementing & sustaining change.

- Some will challenge and/or be threatened by the data.

- Change is messy, personal, political.

- Change is best fostered by collaboration between grassroots action and treetop support.

What Challenges/Implicit Theories are you facing in your project?

- Spend a few minutes talking w/ your team, or reflecting on your project so far … what are your challenges or implicit theories of change?

- Share in the chat box.

From "me" to "we"

HOW do leaders move from "my ideas" to "our ideas"?
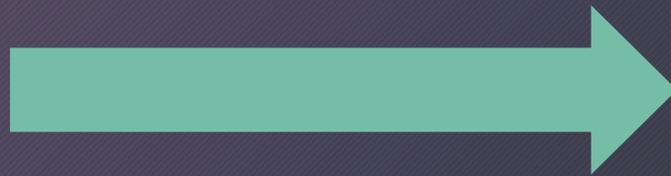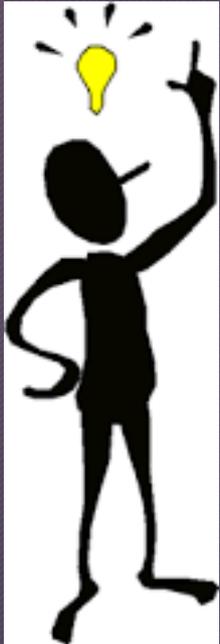
Me-Based Leadership

- Leader defines the problem
- Leader assigns responsibility
- Leader decides how problem will be solved
- Leader demands results and accountability
- Leader commands and is in control of the problem and the outcome

We-Based Leadership

- Leader identifies the problem or area to be addressed
- Leader assigns responsibility to a diverse team(s)
- Leader empowers and supports team to use multiple perspectives to come up with solutions
- Leader holds team accountable
- Leader builds capacity for shared leadership and collaborative problem-solving

Building capacity for shared leadership

Need to:

- Build understanding of the problem
- Gain support of positional/administrative leaders
- Assemble the right and diverse team
- Promote effective team functioning and dynamics
- Engage in organizational learning

Strategies for Building Capacity

Ex. Gain support from positional leaders:

For Informal Leaders:

- Be sure your supervisor knows about the project

- Frame it in the context of institutional goals

- Present the work as a solution to a problem as opposed to a problem that you need your supervisor to solve

- Get to know your leaders and understand their priorities (take advantage of university events, listen to/read public comments)

- Seek external funding where possible, don't just ask for institutional resources;

- Consider how existing resources can be leveraged or redeployed

For Positional Leaders:

- Give permission to innovators by providing support

- Bring project goals and outcomes to upper level leaders in the context of institutional goals

- Show up to project events even if for a drop in

- Include project goals and results in other relevant meetings – talk about them!

- Identify institutional funds that can be used to catalyze and support project goals

- Offer administrative support for meetings (logistics, food)

- Send teams to conferences; invite teams for post-conference/PD program follow up

- Be a role model

Shared Leadership in Your Project

1. Review the homework questions and identify areas where you need to build capacity. Put your response in the chat box.

2. How do you think this will help you with your project? Chat in!