Recognizing the Adaptive Challenges of Defining Our Purpose, Our Values, Our Vision and our Future”
Your Purpose and Your Mission

Our Mission: To promote the long-term health of the land and its people through research, education and advocacy that advance an economically viable, ecologically sound, and socially just food and farming system.
Understanding the ‘NATURE’ of Difficult Work

• Intros

• Understanding “The Gap”

• Understanding Technical Challenges vs. Adaptive Challenges

• Understanding Leadership and Authority

2017 Conference “Conversation”
THE GAP

Issues and Concerns

Aspirations
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<tr>
<th><strong>DISTINGUISHING TECHNICAL AND ADAPTIVE</strong></th>
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<td><strong>TECHNICAL WORK</strong></td>
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<td><strong>long-term</strong></td>
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<td><strong>make progress</strong></td>
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<td><strong>curiosity</strong></td>
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Understanding Authority AND Leadership

Provides:

- Protection
- Direction
- Order

In exchange for cooperation

Mobilizes people to do DIFFICULT work.
Practical Adaptive Applications for Defining Our Purpose, Our Values, Our Vision For Our Future

Manage Self
Diagnose The Situation
Energizing Others
Intervening Skillfully
• Leadership Starts with.....YOU!

• To be “EFFECTIVE” we must manage...ourselves!
*YOU*

Your Values
Experience
Skills
Family
Preferences
Triggers etc.

All of the situations in the world

All the people in the world

Experiment

Experiment
Default behaviors

- Come naturally to you
- Require little thought to deploy
- Match your own preferences
- Are predictable
- Can be effective... sometimes
Strengths, Vulnerabilities and Triggers

Strengths- What you are very good at! Leadership competencies that come naturally to you

Vulnerabilities- Exist at a ‘gut’ level. Comes from a latin word that means ‘wound’. They encompass areas that make you open to attack. (secrets, difficult relationships, past mistakes, private ambitions or personal cravings that could impede your ability to make progress on your leadership challenge)

Triggers- Actions, behaviors, events or even ideas that simply set you off—negatively or positively—and cause you to react more out of emotion than out of...strategy.
What TRIGGERS you when it comes to the adaptive challenge of defining your purpose, value and vision for the future of agriculture in this state, this region...our country?
Practical Steps for Managing Self

• Awareness

• Breathe

• Conscious Choice
Diagnosing the Situation
See, Experience
Behaviors
Patterns, Relationships

Observe

Do, Act
Purpose/Learning
If...then...
Smart Experiments
Monitor

Intervene

Interpret

Make Sense
Technical > Adaptive
Benign > Conflictual
Individual > Systemic
Diagnosing the Situation—Exploring Tough Interpretations

- Benign interpretations do not challenge the status quo or the person “telling the story.”
- Conflictual interpretations “raise the heat” by revealing unspoken motivations.
- Individual interpretations account for actions by assigning cause to a specific individual.
- Systemic interpretations account for the pressures, patterns and roles that exist in any group.
Energize Others - Working Across Factions
How do we get better at identifying who has to do the work and what is at stake for them?
Practical Adaptive Steps for Energize Others—Working Across Factions

**Values**
Deeply held beliefs, often which are based on a significant life experience or how you were raised.

**Loyalties**
Dedication to a group, a place, people, or a way of doing things.
(loyalties often trump values)

**Losses**
Things we give up if progress is made. Loss of control, loss of prestige, loss of comfort, or familiarity. We anticipate loss and see this as a risk we may not be willing to take.
Intervening Skillfully
Intervening Skillfully

“Raising the heat means doing something big or small to compel people to act—to make it more uncomfortable not to address the issue than to live with the issue”
Practical ADAPTIVE steps to Intervene In Systems

Continuously Diagnose
- Ask open ended questions
- Clarify observations and interpretations
- Scale the heat in the room
- Offer multiple interpretations
- Seek different points of view
- Ask for direct feedback
- Explore the stories that are being told

Engage Differently
- Act outside of character
- Disappoint someone
- Experiment by taking a safe risk
- Act outside your payoff 'at risk'
- Speak about your mistakes
- Do the opposite of your default
- Stop deferring to authority
- Reduce your use of authority
- Ask questions when asked for answers

Take Action

Explore发生了
- Name the factions in the room
- Do a faction map
- Explore interests, values, loyalties, and potential losses
- Explore where factions compete
- Work to find common interests

Engage Others
- Advocate for someone's position
- Invite someone new, unrepresented, or quiet into the conversation
- Give the word back
- Make a request of others
- Support someone that took a risk
- Express confidence and trust in others
- Take action to create a more trustworthy process
- Acknowledge the discomfort for ambiguity, uncertainty, conflict, and risk

Address Decision Making
- Pause group and call for a decision
- Make a decision or offer a direction
- Call for opposing views or choices
- Explore consequences of action
- Question purpose and re-examine it
- Offer alternative ways to proceed
- State a call to action

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KANSAS RURAL CENTER
“The improvisational ability to lead adaptively relies on responding to the present situation rather than importing the past into the present and laying it on the current situation like an imperfect template.” — Ronald A. Heifetz, The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing Your Organization and the World”