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Leadership Thinking: A Discipline of the Mind for the Effective Law Enforcement Supervisor

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Abstract.

The primary purpose of this article is to present a foundation for authentic leadership and how it is informed by the Heifetz/Linsky Adaptive Leadership model and Aristotle's Cardinal Virtues. The authors present an adaptive issue and how the leader of a leadership development program employed authentic thinking and the adaptive leadership model to design and implement solutions that improved the quality of frontline leadership in California's law enforcement profession. A corollary purpose is to demonstrate how the conceptual model is then aligned with the process of Kotter's 8-step transformational change model. From that foundation, the reader will learn how a manager in a California state agency responsible for certifying law enforcement training used these tools to transform advanced coursework for the State's 15,000-plus supervisors. Presented as a holistic case story the article reveals how the leader identified issues, orchestrated conflict, created interdependency and self-assessment in team members, analyzed the system, and then deployed solutions to modernize and enhance the outcomes of this critical program.

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Leadership is oft times thought to be an aptitude (Vygotsky, 1978), a skill set somehow developed through either watching great leaders at work, or somehow by reading accounts of success and drawing conclusions about what must have transpired between the lines of the story. In most instances, this is due to a naïve belief that a single attribute (i.e. an element of character or personality) creates the formula for success (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). In fact, there are lessons of history and thoughts of great minds from Aristotle to Aquinas from whom we can draw insight. There are frames of mind to consider leadership as work to adapt to change (e.g., Bolman & Deal, 2003; Gardner, 2011), and then to lead others through that change in a structured systemic way (e.g., Fullan, 2007; Northouse, 2012; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, & Smith, 1999). This is a story of such an effort; one drawn from a foundation of philosophy, a theory of leadership and a sequential process of transformation. Far beyond mere hypothesis, the story is one of leadership in action; leadership in the teaching of leadership to others. In this instance, the lessons are learned in one of the highest-stakes professions - contemporary policing. It is not, however, a story of cops and robbers. Instead, the

lessons learned and the employed models of leadership and change can be scaled to any professional setting.

There is a belief by some that leadership can be taught (e.g., Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Parks, 2005; Yukl, 1999). If that is true, one of the core questions might be, "What do you teach?" One of the more common approaches is the study of great leaders. Others may focus on the traits and behaviors that successful leaders represent. In fact, leadership can be taught (Parks, 2005); we contend the emphasis placed on biographies, traits, and behaviors are not the most fruitful path for one seeking to understand leadership. Rather, the key to more effective leadership lies at the end of the path that begins with considering authentic leadership as a way of thinking. Using a modified version of the Adaptive Leadership model by Heifetz and Linsky (2002), this article presents an adaptive issue and how the leader employed authentic thinking to design and implement solutions that improved the quality of frontline leadership in California's law enforcement profession.

This primary purpose of this article is to establish a foundation for authentic leadership and how it is informed by the Heifetz/Linsky Adaptive Leadership model and Aristotle's Cardinal Virtues. A corollary purpose is to demonstrate how the conceptual model is then aligned with the process of Kotter's 8-step transformational change model. From that foundation, the reader will learn how a manager in California's agency responsible to certify and train peace officers used these tools to transform advanced coursework for the State's 15,000-plus frontline supervisors. Presented as a holistic case story, the article reveals how the leader identified issues, orchestrated conflict, created interdependency and self-assessment in team members, analyzed the system, and then deployed solutions to modernize and enhance the outcomes of this critical program.

While we ultimately advocate for an authentic and adaptive leadership model, it is important to note that the central context for this work is law enforcement agencies in the southwestern United States. We argue, however, that "leadership thinking" and adaptivity have powerful potential to benefit and transform national and international agencies and organizations. One of the beauties of the Heifetz/Linsky model is that it can work in multiple arenas: from sociology, to psychology, to business, to educational leadership, to law enforcement and other public service. The principles of this model apply equally in the commercial and not-for-profit sectors (Parks, 2005). Common threads that weave throughout leadership work across disciplines include the "best interests" of the greater good; professional interests in gaining/sustaining the "trust" in systems; cultural awareness; reflective practice; professional and personal responsibility; and philosophy/value supporting equitable, equal, and excellent service for the collective public good. Towards this end, we begin this journey by

first offering a definition as to what we mean by authentic leadership.

Authentic Leadership

A review of extant literature indicated common themes and patterns to define authenticity. For our purpose, we borrowed definitions from several researchers to define the term operationally: authenticity is leadership indicative of "professionally effective, ethically sound, and consciously reflective practices in educational administration" (Duigan & Bhindi, 1997, p. 197) - that is "knowledge-based, values informed, and skillfully executed" (Taylor, 1991, p. 39). Authentic leadership implies a genuine kind of leadership --a hopeful, open-ended, visionary and creative response to social circumstances, as opposed to the more traditional dualistic portrayal of management and leadership practices (Begley 2001, 2003, 2006, cited in Normore & Issa Lahera, 2012).

Leadership by definition refers to practices that extend beyond the usual procedural context of organizational management (Starratt, 2004). For our purpose, we contend however that "leadership thinking" and adaptivity have powerful potential to benefit and transform national and international agencies and organizations. As we examine the definition of leadership, being principle-based means having clarity about who we are, why we do the things we do; and finally, why we do those things the way we do. In support of previous research (e.g., Shriberg & Shriberg, 2010), we contend that principles are fundamental rules or doctrines that represent a standard of behavior, and are intended to govern the creation of law and guide the actions of a community's members. The term is sometimes erroneously interchanged with "values" which are particular to the individual, and represent deeply held beliefs that inform an individual's actions and waver little over a lifetime. The most significant principles are those grounded in virtue.

As Aristotle suggested, virtue is a state of excellence along a continuum from deficit to excess (Aristotle, 2003). Aristotle noted this balance as the Golden Mean; Confucius wrote similarly about the Doctrine of the Mean (Legge, 1893). As one's principles are grounded in virtue, leadership through care-based reciprocity is achievable. It is important to note however that Aristotle separated moral from intellectual virtues; the intellectual was wisdom (generally from teaching…) and moral wisdom was from feeling, choosing and then acting (well) along the continuum between excess and deficiency. His, and Plato's, belief was that the pursuit of eudemonia (e.g., happiness or good spirit) was the ultimate goal to live a happy life, and also necessary for the perfect polis (the city to which Socrates was dedicated). Aristotle, and later St. Thomas Aquinas (1947) defined a set of core virtues, the Cardinal Virtues, as cornerstones for everyday life.

The virtues themselves exist along their own continuum of excess versus deficiency; in concert, they form the basis for trustworthiness, the capital of leadership. One who is not trusted cannot sustain a reciprocal relationship with others. Without reciprocity of purpose, leadership itself will not exist. These virtues include (Aquinas, 1947, Q61, A4):

Prudence - the knowledge of universal principles and how to apply them in everyday life. Thomas Aquinas wrote that Prudence was the most important of the four, since it represents a motive to abide by the right reasons for things to be done.

Justice - the social virtue in three parts; legal justice- what individuals owe to society; commutative justice – what individuals owe to one another in balance, and according to what is due to them; and, distributive justice – what society owes to individuals, such as equal protection, equal access to air grievances, and the equity of rights amongst all

Fortitude - courage based on justice whose purpose is to remove obstacles to justice. Fortitude allows us to face fear, temptation or other vices with equanimity, and without allowing emotions to overcome them.

Temperance - the ability to control our emotions, anger and appetite for pleasure, all of which would undermine prudence if left unchecked.

Prudence, the virtue represented in a contemporary sense in "Emotional Intelligence" (e.g., Antonakis, 2009; Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000; Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Gardner, 2011) , presides over the "action" virtues of *courage, temperance* and *justice* (Aquinas, 1947). To have principles grounded in virtue sets a foundation from which to make decisions. However, we argue that being principle-based does not make decision making less difficult. What it often does is make selecting the decision options easier. Delivering the decision is another challenge.

Leadership first, and most importantly, requires influence (Rost, 1991). Although one may influence others consciously or inadvertently through action or example, there is no relationship, and thus, no leadership. To be of influence in leadership implies deliberateness. Being deliberate implies a level of consciousness; a way of thinking that is both intentional and strategic. To ensure the intended effect of our actions, we must first take the time to think. Thinking in this sense infers more than mere cognitive reasoning. It is a process of deliberation emerging from self-awareness, authenticity, and an ability to stand apart from oneself to view issues "from the balcony."

Balcony Thinking: Adaptive Leadership

Balcony thinking is aligned with thinking strategically about issues, incidents and decisions within the leadership relationship. Heifetz and Linsky's Adaptive Leadership model (2012) explains a deliberate way of thinking that precedes and extends beyond one's actions. It drills deeply into values and beliefs to develop pathways to resolve organizational challenges (see also Argyris & Schön, 1996). Furthermore, it strives to separate the technical issues (those that might be identified in previous years as "management" issues) from adaptive issues, (those requiring an ability to see what does not yet exist, imagine that which has not occurred, and to energize others to that vision of change that benefits all involved). The Heifetz/Linsky model provides additional cognitive elements to Kotter's (1995) eight steps to effectively implementing change in organizations.

The Change Process

Kotter (1995) describes a change process that involves time, commitment, planning, and deliberate actions on behalf of the leader as well as the group. The critical first step, though, is not to focus on the changes needed or the problem at hand. Nor is it to create a "vision" of the future and then seek to implement it. Counter-intuitively, it is to either capitalize, or sometimes create, "a sufficient sense of urgency to prompt members to seek to change the status quo" (p. 60). Once a sense of urgency has been established, a core group must be formed as its guiding coalition. A successful team for this purpose may be as small as 3 to 5 people; however, key to the success of the team is the conscious effort to include those senior enough to be able to operate within and outside the corporate hierarchy as needs dictate. Of course, in organizations that lack experience in teamwork, the team itself must first be acclimated to the influence relationship in that arena. The place where most start, a vision of some future state, does not precede the first two steps but rather, it follows them.

"In failed transformations" Kotter writes, "you often find plenty of plans and directives and programs, but no vision." (1995, p. 63) Instead, the third step is for the guiding coalition to coalesce around an easily described, easily communicated picture of the future. Extending on that thought, the vision must describe a future state that is different (and more rewarding) than the present - one where the person to whom it is described can envision their role. The fourth step in Kotter's hierarchy, then, is the relentless telling of the story; to communicate the scope and direction of the group. That is the only hope the guiding coalition has to convince others to enlist, to see that useful change is possible and desirable, and to see how any interim discomfort or added work will be worth it. The first four steps most likely comprise a good deal of time, effort, energy, and political capital. Those engaged might feel they are "over the hump" and that the envisioned change is inevitable. However, they are only halfway to the finish line.

The fifth step to transform the organization is to "remove obstacles in your path" (Kotter, 1995, p. 64). These might be policy impediments or they could be logistical. They could even be only in the minds of those who remain unconvinced, and who have the power to impede progress. At times, however, the problem rests with bosses who may object to change to which they are not invested, or in those who filter the vision through their self-interest, and are not willing to accommodate the discomfort of change. Kotter further notes that not all obstacles can be removed in the first half of any transformative effort, but the larger obstacles must. If the blocker is a cost issue, a policy, or a process, then that issue can be changed with deliberate effort. Contrarily, if it is a person, it is the leadership that would dictate they be treated fairly and with dignity, and in a way that is consistent with the vision of the future. Once obstacles are mitigated, the last three steps can fall into place with a team committed to success.

The sixth step is to generate short-term wins. Kotter concludes that most people won't go on the "long march" unless they see compelling evidence of its efficacy within 12 to 24 months (1995, p. 65). The team may hope that others see the intent and hard work as evidence enough. If so, they would fall short of their responsibility to engineer opportunities to achieve interim success markers and to celebrate that success. Core guiding coalition members should be tasked to develop and unpack these wins, both to help create credibility of the work, and also to help enhance the interdependence of the entire team. The last two steps are closely interrelated. After the work is completed to this point, the temptation could be to "declare victory" and move on. Therefore, it becomes critical not to confuse winning a battle - even an important one - with winning the war. Kotter's seventh step would be to ensure that a declaration of victory (and the inevitable relaxation of effort that would follow) was not premature. The majority of successful change efforts take several years, even with short-term victories surfacing months or years prior to that time (Fullan, 2007). The eighth and final step for a successful transformation would be to anchor changes in the corporate culture deeply enough to survive the transition to the next generation of leadership (Kotter, 1995, p. 67). This is where Heifetz and Linsky's adaptive leadership model will be especially helpful.

As adaptivity underpins, and then actualizes transformative change in Kotter's 8-step process, candor emerging from interdependence allows the group to discern present or needed urgency for change. Mutuality enhances the formation of the guiding coalition. Trust-based influence allows people to endorse a vision for which they might have an incomplete view. The difficult conversations, and potentially risky work of removing obstacles, can be done with less effort, less blowback, and to better effect. Short-term wins are questioned less and more readily endorsed by workgroups and teams whose bedrock is mutual success. Finally, adaptive and authentic leadership will create a foundation for succession planning, and for transformations in the future that are as yet unidentified. Therefore, the first task is to ensure as many people as possible in the organizational structure can be developed into adaptive thinkers as a prelude to meet challenges in the road ahead.

Adaptivity

The quality of adaptivity lives in the ability to think with both conscious intent and strategic logic to identify limitations in a system and its participants. Understanding that leadership is a *way of thinking* increases personal choice (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). It is no longer bound by the characteristics of traits and behaviors; rather, it is limited only by the boundaries of thinking adaptively. Adaptive thinking leads to the revelation that existing knowledge, skills and abilities are insufficient to tackle emerging challenges. Most importantly, adaptive thinking reveals a process to identify how the system's existing values are not sufficient to overcome the existing issue. This includes the organizational values as well as the individual values of all participants.

Leadership: Deliberate and Adaptive

To refine our understanding of the core premise that leadership is deliberate, and that adaptive leadership is a useful model of adaptive thinking, the reader can reflect on organization challenges of their own, especially those that have endured. In all likelihood, attempts to resolve that challenge have been put in place with limited past success, that the challenge simply continues, and the collateral damage also continues to mount. People become frustrated, morale fades, and productivity is below maximum efficiency. Gossip may surface, cynics might find their voice, and the town crier seemingly persists in work to espouse the futility of the current leader's vision, mission, and abilities. If we have a challenge similar to this, we most likely have an adaptive issue. This means the organization's traditional technical and operational abilities are not sufficient to resolve it. Something new is required. As indicated in the literature (Normore & Issa Lahera, 2012), it is commonly known throughout the research that "strong leadership rises to the top again and again as the key advantage that separates world-class organizations from the rest", and that "great leaders are able not only to craft winning leadership and outcome strategies, but also to drive critical innovation, implement change" (p. 10), and create agile organizations that can succeed in complex times.

In the following section, we present a case of the adaptive leadership journey - one that illustrates the clash of tradition and emerging challenges. It serves as a

means to better grasp the need for a leader to have adaptive capacity to achieve success, and to think and act with credibility, courage, sensitivity, and authenticity. The case documents the journey of a statewide leadership program for law enforcement steeped in tradition with an ongoing challenge of how best to develop sergeants as leaders. The issue has persisted for decades, resulting in the creation of a program in 1988 intended to train first-line supervisors to exercise leadership more effectively. Although the program was well-received, there was no empirical evidence to indicate it had a sustained effect on the practice of leadership by its graduates. Ad hoc reports indicated those who completed the program performed more effectively. An assessment of the system within which those graduates worked, though, did not reflect the hoped-for significant changes in organizational culture or performance. Eventually, the program began a gradual evolution through the efforts of a succession of managers assigned to administer it, but largely retained its original content for more than fifteen years. In 2007, however, a newly promoted progressive-thinking program manager who understood ways to think adaptively, set about to engage the process of change. The foundation of this change was to modernize the program to achieve higher levels of productivity, efficacy, participant accountability, and facilitator craftsmanship. As a result of this work, interdependence, flexibility and consciousness also rose to levels much higher than before.

A Case of Authentic Leadership: First, Do No Harm

The marching orders were easy enough to understand. The new manager had more than 30 years' experience in the field, even though he was new both to his new organization and the specifics of his position. The program, a leadership development institute for first-line law enforcement supervisors, was sponsored by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Its goal was to enhance the leadership capacity in the ranks of field supervision to foster greater accountability, responsiveness and performance by police agencies Statewide. He was coming in on the heels of 2 previous managers in 5 years; from his view, tenure was not looking stable. He was a man of principle, though, with a keen sense of human nature and a discipline of thinking that was truly adaptive. He also knew the history of the program, the personalities of the 30-plus members of staff, and the significance the program had on thousands of its graduates. His superior simply asked him to get the program back on track, on the leading edge - where it once was. Recent participant surveys/evaluations indicated significant change was needed. Before we unfold the process used, it is important to understand the manner in which data were collected and analyzed to

reach a point where significant change emerged as a potential future.

Holistic Data Collection and Analysis

At the end of each 8-month training session, each participant in the program completes an evaluation in the form of a series of open-ended questions. The purpose of the evaluation is to solicit written feedback intended for program improvement and effectiveness. Sample evaluation questions include: (1) How was the curriculum for this session challenging? (2) How do you feel you contributed to the learning process? (3) How were you able to correlate the readings to the class discussions and exercises? (4) What concepts did you identity in this session? (5) What relevance to leadership did you draw from this session? (6)What impact did this session have on you? On average there are 20 courses per year, with approximately 24 sergeant participants per course. This eight month, 192 hour course meets for three consecutive days (a total of 24 hours) each month. Throughout the three-day block, participants complete a course evaluation form and submit it at the end of day three. Analysis of the course evaluations is holistic in nature in that the facilitators examine all evaluations at annual meetings, look for common themes and patterns, and subsequently summarize the findings. Dialogues unpack the participant feedback and decisions are made on how best to modify the existing case studies and the curriculum. Comments ranged from, 'why are we beating a dead horse?' and 'this is no longer applicable to being a sergeant,' to 'this program has absolutely transformed my marriage and children as well as how I supervise at work!' The evaluations stood in contrast to the value placed in the program from the leadership of the organization. They were rightfully proud of the legacy of the program, and fearful that changes would dilute its impact. This resulted in a final admonition by the manager's superior, the Executive Director, who said "Whatever you decide to do, do no harm to the program."

So the manager went on his way, marching orders in hand, with deliberate consciousness – a discipline of mind consistent with adaptive thinking. His goal was to revise and update the curriculum of the 192-hour program. His general goals were to make it more academically rigorous, participant-focused, and product-driven while incorporating adult learning theory and best teaching practices. He was determined to create a curriculum path that would encourage facilitator-leaders and the agency to rethink leadership, teaching, and how to learn. He also wanted to push the program further toward the leading edge of leadership training – where it was when introduced in the state in 1988. The scope of the re-engineering of the course was immense. The course was highly sought by those eligible to attend. Acceptance into it was by application only. More than 10,000 supervisors were eligible to attend at any given

time; yet only 430 could be accepted in any year. Since the most qualified in this pool are also commonly promoted to higher levels (both before and after attendance) the actual pool of eligible attendees is much larger. The program serves as a necessary benchmark for subsequent promotion to managerial and executive roles, and is considered a foundation to that end. A lot was at stake because, as is universally known, perception dictates reality. It was becoming clear to the leadership in the State that the cutting-edge program, as it was once established, was no longer sharp enough to cut through contemporary issues. Thus, began a grand experiment.

As with any good science, this experiment was conducted with intention, deliberate thought, and a structure to assess outcomes through data gathering and analysis. Because the new manager knew the history of the program and its facilitators, he was able to diagnose the issues with relative ease. Among the lessons he had learned were (See Appendix A):

- *The 18-year old leadership curriculum was resistant to previously attempted curriculum changes even though it had lost its sheen in the eyes of the program's sponsors*
- *The existing cohort of 35 facilitators was conceptually split; some were adherents to the original curriculum due to their anecdotal observations of seeming life-long changes professionally and personally. Others thought the program was showing its age with dated material, an androcentric focus and its latent hostility towards management as opposed to leadership*

Adaptivity and Leadership*

1. **Identification and Diagnosis**
2. **Getting on the Balcony**
3. **Thinking Politically**
4. **Orchestrating Conflict**
5. **Giving the Work Back**
6. **Holding Steady**

* Modified from *Leadership on the Line* by Heifetz and Linsky (2002)

- *The attitude, 'Why fix it, if it's not broken?' was a common refrain for many working in the program*
- *Even with its lengthy history, there was little consistency amongst facilitation teams that, in theory, were presenting the same course content*
- *A long-held belief that ambiguity built into the original course was the best way to create highly productive leaders*

In addition to these five major diagnostic symptoms, one additional symptom was critical: to establish this issue as *adaptive* and not simply *technical*.

The manager knew from his *balcony view* that the fundamental values of some facilitators were in conflict with the program's organizational values related to curriculum, and with the need for change and to integrate research-based teaching practices. The manager knew what he had on his hands; he knew this was an adaptive issue. It was adaptive because the existing knowledge, skills and abilities were insufficient to overcome the issue. Even if a new curriculum of *perfect design* was implemented, it would fail because conflicting values amongst facilitators and the organization would inhibit behavior conducive to a congruent values-based environment.

His next step in this grand experiment was to hire an outside consultant with expertise in adaptive leadership, curriculum design, adult learning theory, and assessment and facilitation skills. This move came with high risk because the consultant was an academic and had no law enforcement experience. This alone challenged the culture and belief in law enforcement that its inherent uniqueness was sufficient enough to make it difficult, if not impossible, for an "outsider" to train or design a curriculum that was contextually relevant while being authentically delivered. The balcony not only provided the ability to appropriately diagnose the issue, it also allowed strategic and deliberate political thinking. In this instance, it meant building alliances and relationships to foster transparency, truth, and cognitive humility. Working closely with the consultant, he systematically and deliberately identified allies, opponents, and opportunities.

In addition to thinking politically, the program manager was adept with his deliberate design in what Heifetz and Linsky (2012) call "giving the work back." Giving the work back is not a single event; it unfolds over time. Giving the work back began with the creation of a Curriculum Task Force committee (which became the effort's guiding coalition) comprised of a select group of the program's facilitators. At the first meeting, they spent three days with the curriculum designer to revise and create curriculum aligned to the program's mission and goals (See Appendix A). As a result of this initial success, more than two-dozen three-day curriculum development meetings occurred during the next three years. This helped to create a vision of the program's future, to communicate it to all involved, and empower all to act on its behalf. In the first of those meetings, a significant "small victory" emerged as participants moved from what had been seemingly endless discussions into a dialog that became a cornerstone of later success.

Early on the first day of that meeting, the consultant utilized an "Existing State - Future State" (Garmston & Wellman, 2009) protocol. In it, the group individually wrote and then posted values according to

preferences and principles; the various descriptions were plastered on a wall for all to see. The wall created what Grinder (1997) and Zoller (2010) describe as a third point from which posted anonymous statements revealed values conflicts, objections, and possible losses if the change initiative was successful. The wall became the focal point in the environment; the group was able to talk about their values through dialogue and not through a bantering of personality traits. It became the focus of the group's energy allowing them to discuss the issues with cognitive focus as opposed to emotional banter that often creates an arena where people talk at each other and not with each other. This particular day represented a functional demonstration of dialogue in action. Participants were speaking to understand, and not to assert a particular position or belief. Ideas were put on the table for consideration. Assumptions were overtly suspended. Individuals in the group shifted their values during that meeting. A paradigm shift event occurred, and a sense of urgency surfaced - one that the manager knew would be used to leverage transformational change throughout the two year's of meetings that followed.

Work was intense during the three-day curriculum development meetings; facilitators provided context while the consultant facilitated the design of the learning environment. In these meetings, conversations occurred regarding what was most important to teach, and how best to create a learning environment for participants to generate evidence of their learning. Using a curriculum design based on Wiggins and McTighe (1998), there were conversations about what was core to the program. Getting the participants to understand and value curriculum design (and a belief that teaching is a deliberate act) was accomplished through these sessions.

These mindful moves by the program manager created a critical mass of people who, through their participation and professional development, grew to understand and endorse the program from new perspectives. Short-term wins in the classroom soon emerged and were celebrated at recurring meetings to consolidate the changes and embed them in the program's culture. One of the facilitators emerged as a mentor to the group and exemplified his values by saying, "Just follow the curriculum; it works." This eloquent line became a mantra for the facilitator cohort. The technical gains made during this phase were evidenced in participant evaluations that resulted in increases in academic rigor and greater participant accountability. As with any transformational effort, however, some obstacles remained. The obstacles had been largely removed from the policies, content, and direction. The remaining impediment to success was to address obstacles presented by the facilitators themselves.

Values Shifts

Once the curriculum development progressed to the point that some facilitators recognized its impact on participant learning, their values began to change (See Appendix A). This shift, however, was not quick, nor was it universal across the cohort of 40 facilitators. To accelerate the process to shift their values, the consultant facilitated a protocol designed to surface values in an emotionally safe environment. This stage was necessary to navigate the portion of the Heifetz model that focuses on values, and also created a venue that allowed for rich dialogue.

During this protocol, many facilitators discovered what they greatly valued at one time was more of an individual preference than an organizational principle. When confronted with deciding what was essential to learn in the leadership program, they came to understand that choosing was easy when based on principles grounded in virtue. This meeting came after they had explored Aristotle's *Ethics* (2000) to develop an understanding of how virtue contributes to clarifying principles and identifying the sharp division between it and one's preferences.

Decision-making was less challenging when facilitators engaged in conversation about specific curriculum topics once the principles and preferences were identified. The facilitators quickly discovered that specific approaches were often preference-based; yet, the leadership topics were principle-based. For instance, all facilitators knew they would facilitate the instructional delivery of a case study on care-based decision-making, and were willing to consider a variety of approaches. An approach favored by a particular facilitator was no longer the topic of a one-hour argument during a meeting. Instead, facilitators came to realize that approaches were most often preferences, and that topics were principles upon which the outcome-based case studies were developed. In support of earlier research (e.g., Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 1999) when organizations reach this level of common understanding, we have discovered that meetings are more efficient and effective; businesses become more productive and cost efficient, and; people even look forward to meetings. Furthermore, these outcomes were many of the collateral advantages of successfully navigating an adaptive issue in this manner. For our group of facilitators, this learning meant they could expand the scope and impact of their work, and begin to institutionalize sustained change.

Over a period of two years, six large group meetings were held that all the facilitators attended. These meetings served multiple purposes. They were designed to give the work back to those responsible to perform it while "turning up the heat" by creating states of disequilibrium. From the balcony, the manager could see and feel the disequilibrium. From the balcony, one can see alliances – good and bad, the influence of

individuals on the group, who is moving forward, and who might engage in undermining and cynical behavior. In this instance, the balcony afforded laser-like clarity because of the unobstructed view created by this strategic perch.

One significant strategy was to have facilitators present pilot program segments within their meetings. This created a norm of interdependence as facilitators worked with others to present, critique, and enhance the final product. It also helped anchor the program's values as preeminent through the sustained modeling of its anchors to modulate the disequilibrium within tolerable levels. The support structures in place, however, directed the discomfort away from emotional stress towards cognitive eustress. It was in these meetings that many facilitators discovered levels of conscious incompetence while also recognizing support was in place for them to develop their craftsmanship in both content and process as they migrated to levels of conscious competence (increasing expertise in understanding and delivering the new curriculum).

As the meetings and new curricula unfolded, additional data were gathered from the strategic perspective to confirm the desired state of disequilibrium. Initially, as the newly developed curriculum was implemented, the facilitator cohort's range of skill, quality of flexibility, and level of interdependence were insufficient to fully implement participant learning. The existing knowledge of the facilitators was also below that necessary to deliver the curriculum with adequate efficacy and craftsmanship. Lastly, the values of some facilitators were still doggedly in conflict with the organizational values related to the curriculum and the need for change. In light of this gap between the starting point and the envisioned future, the work continued.

Final Reflections

Since the implementation of the Adaptive Leadership model, participants must complete an adaptive leadership project and present their projects at the end of the 8-month course. Several projects have been implemented throughout the state with full support from Police Chiefs and Police Captains. Examples include new mentoring programs, annual review procedures, and Internal Investigation procedures. In one agency, the average processing of Internal Affairs (IA) cases was reduced from more than 200 down to only 24. Most importantly, all levels in that agency have increased collaboration and cooperation with significant reported increases in morale and attitude with regard to the investigation of instances of possible misconduct.

For more than 16 months, data from course evaluations and facilitator feedback revealed the original goals of this change initiative were being met. A final political act in adaptive thinking was the selection of

lead facilitators responsible to train and then roll out the new curriculum with newly hired facilitators. Selection of lead trainers was based on the abilities of flexibility and interdependence as noted by Costa (2002). The transformation from old to new is still in the making. Progress has been significant at many levels, including the curriculum, facilitator quality and the participant feedback. During this extended phase of sustained and tolerable disequilibrium, the leader is holding steady to his initial charge to maintain the quality of the program and to do no harm. His authentic leadership modeling began to be emulated by others as they assumed control of the future. Congruent to research conducted by Parks (2005), by holding steady the leader was able to identify those facilitators who needed more support. In her efforts to dismantle the notion that an individual is born a leader, Parks asserts that the leader's "ability to intervene, to hold steady, inspire a group, and work in both verbal and nonverbal realms" (p. 13) helps the adaptive leader to plot a way to develop presence. Some, most in fact, made choices aligned to the newly structured values and continue to increase their conscious competence. Some are even at the unconsciously competent level and have fully embraced the curriculum intellectually and procedurally. Those that made choices incongruent with the program's goals and values are struggling. Consistent with the Cardinal Virtue of fortitude, the manager has acted to ensure the few who have not elected to move forward are on the verge of being separated from the program.

A new sense of efficacy is emerging amongst facilitators. It is a belief they have the capacity and capability to get the job done with competence and confidence. They are also aware the pathway they chose includes:

- *Refining their craftsmanship on leadership, content and facilitation strategies*
- *Increasing their consciousness "in the moment" when facilitating*
- *Being more aware of what they are doing, what the group is doing, and how the curriculum is unfolding; and,*
- *Achieving and sustaining a new level of interdependence with their partner facilitators*

Finally, facilitators had developed new levels of flexibility because the curriculum was now outcome-focused and participant-centered. This literally forced them to deal adaptively with participant thinking. They also adapted to an authentic model of leadership within their instructional cohorts. This method helped guide how issues are explored, how conflict is mediated and how they moderated participant attention and participation. Through this new methodology, the traditional roles of facilitators are reimagined, and now have a different approach to learning. According to Parks (2005), "Leadership is less about an individual's

talent and exercise of power, and more about empowering a group of individuals to work through, and learn from, their toughest issues" (p. 232). In this new model, the facilitator "is a co-learner and at the same time a model, practicing authority and leadership in public so that others may eavesdrop, watch, contend with, and learn"(p. 232).

The project is not complete, as is true with any transformational process. As happens often, the process achieved the vision of the initial goal. Without authentic leadership grounded in virtue, though, the trust and influence necessary for success would not have been achieved. Even now, technical adjustments continue. From the balcony perch, the lens of adaptivity focuses on the people (and the system) as they engage in a principle-based influence relationship where real change is the goal. Beyond this effort, and perhaps most importantly, the system is primed for the next, as yet unknown, necessary change in its path. Finally, we contend this adaptive leadership model is for anyone who has a sphere of influence in an organization, and leads from any level in an organization. If people have a sphere of influence in their organization, then they can lead adaptively.

We contend that "leadership thinking" and adaptivity have powerful potential to transform organizations of any size or locale, including educational leadership, adult education, law enforcement, psychology, sociology, peace studies, criminal justice, and restorative practice. The applications of adaptive leadership and Kotter's change process as utilized in this case study demonstrate how deliberate implementation of these models resulted in a significant systemic change in how leaders lead in law enforcement. More importantly, it is a roadmap for others to follow as they work to achieve similar results.

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Appendix A
Flowchart outlining the application of the adaptive leadership and actualized results

The Charge
- Increase academic rigor
- Create and design a program incorporating adult learning theory
- Increase student accountability

The Obstacles
- Facilitator cohort resistance to curriculum changes
- Some facilitators believed the program was sufficiently effective
- Some questioned "why fix what is not broke"
- Facilitator cohort valued individual facilitator approaches and saw no need for program consistency
- Facilitators believed ambiguity in the program was a positive element
- Facilitators believed there was no need to embrace or advocate specific models of leadership

The Treatment

Program manager and curriculum strategist apply Adaptive Leadership (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002), with Kotter's (1992) framework

Identification and diagnosis of the issues

- See the system (balcony)
- Think politically
- Orchestrate conflict
- Give the work back
- Hold steady

Protocols used at facilitator meetings and curriculum design meetings from *Adaptive Schools* (Garmston & Wellman, 2009), and *The Choreography of Presenting* (Zoller & Landry, 2010).

The Result
- Facilitator cohort embraces revised curriculum
- Facilitators believe the revised program is exceptional and innovative
- A culture of continuous improvement and refinement is embraced
- Facilitator cohort values program consistency
- Facilitators believe that the increase in student accountability, responsibility, and application of learning is valued
- Facilitators believe that leadership can be taught and learned
- Facilitators believe that adaptive leadership is worth advocating to create leaders wanting to change and improve systems