



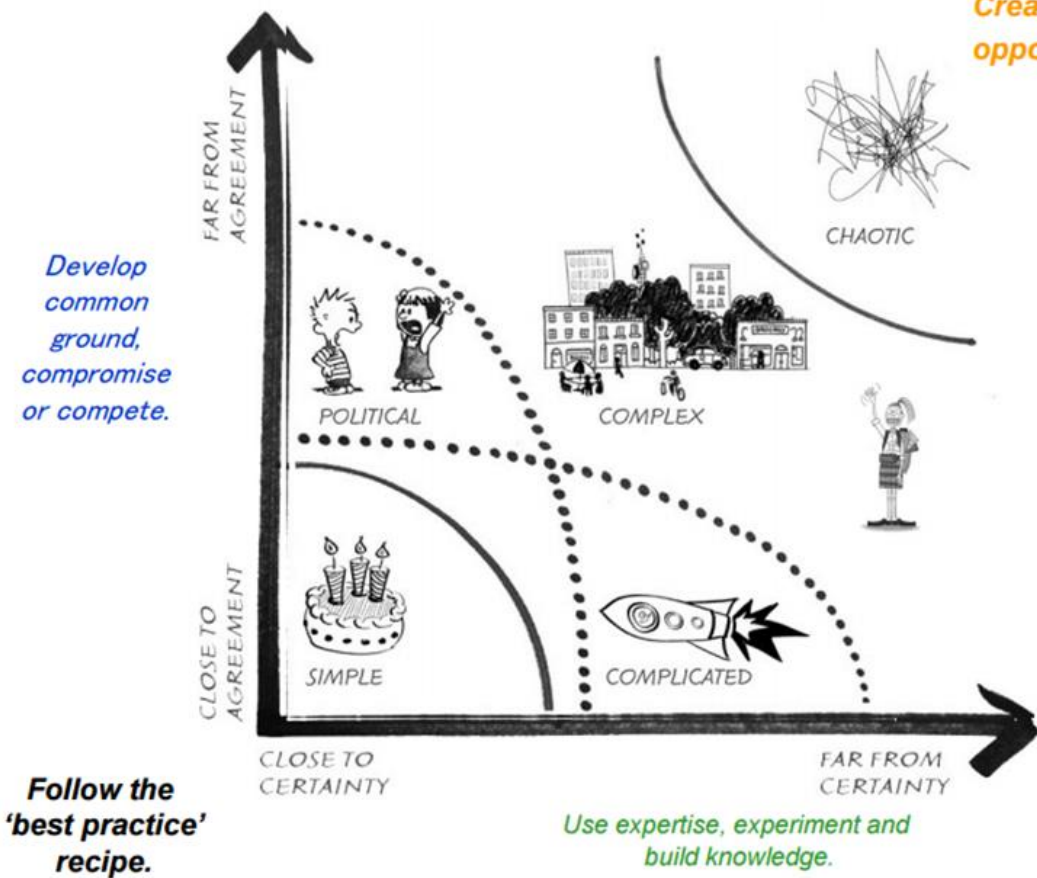
Using Adaptive Leadership to Navigate Uncertainty

Glenn M. Landers, ScD



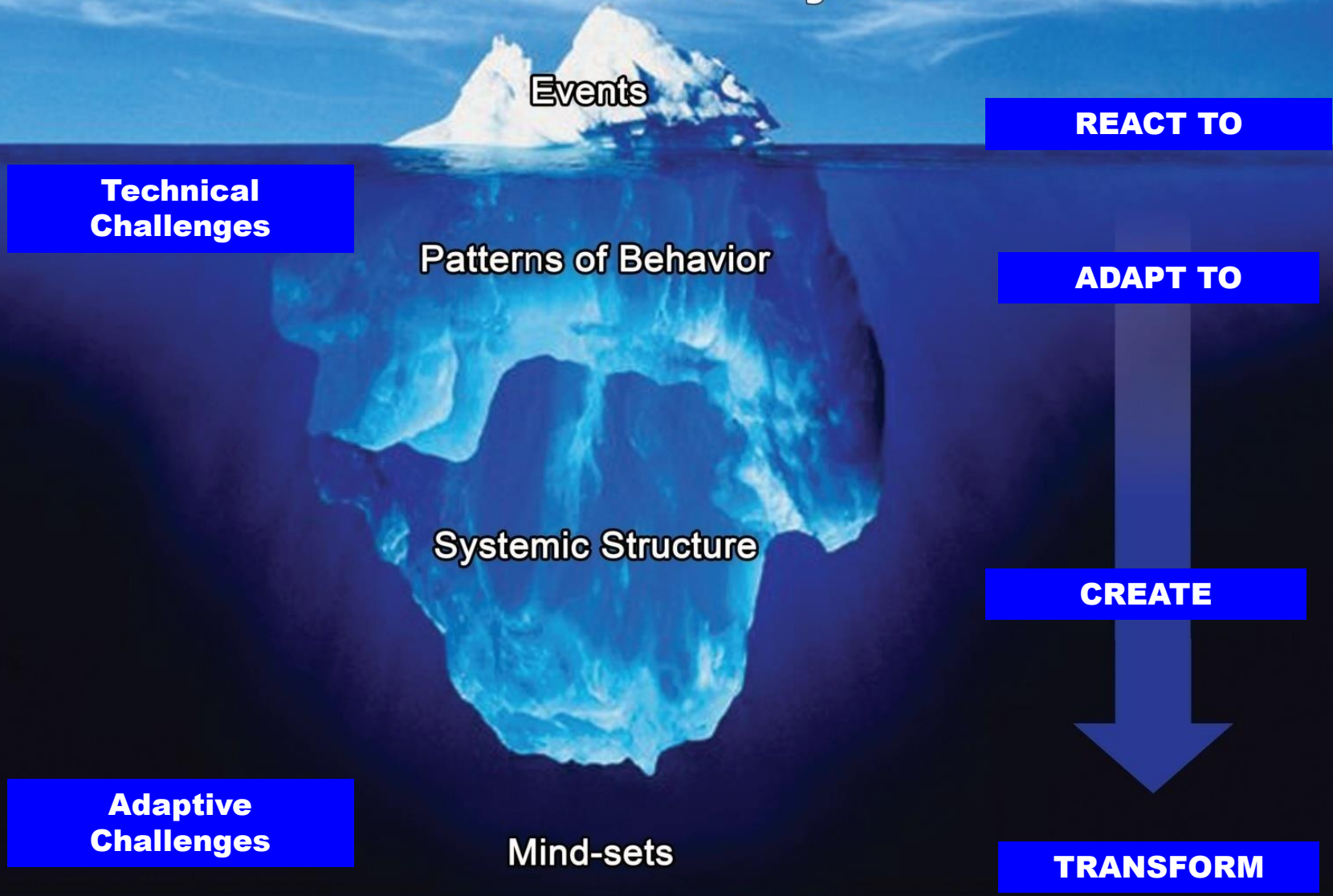
Employ participatory, systemic and experimental approaches.

Create stability, look for opportunities to innovate.

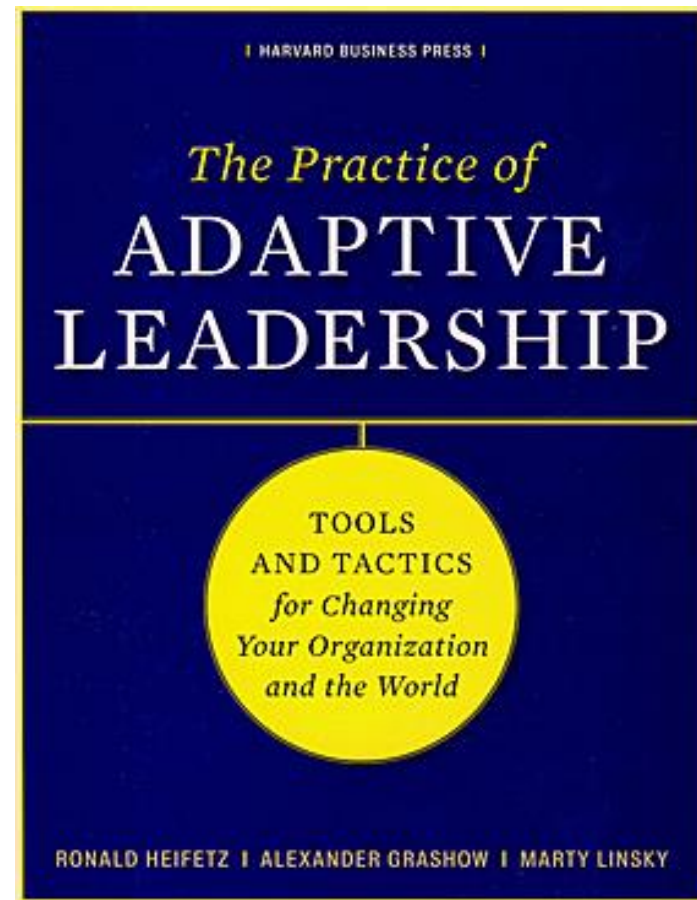
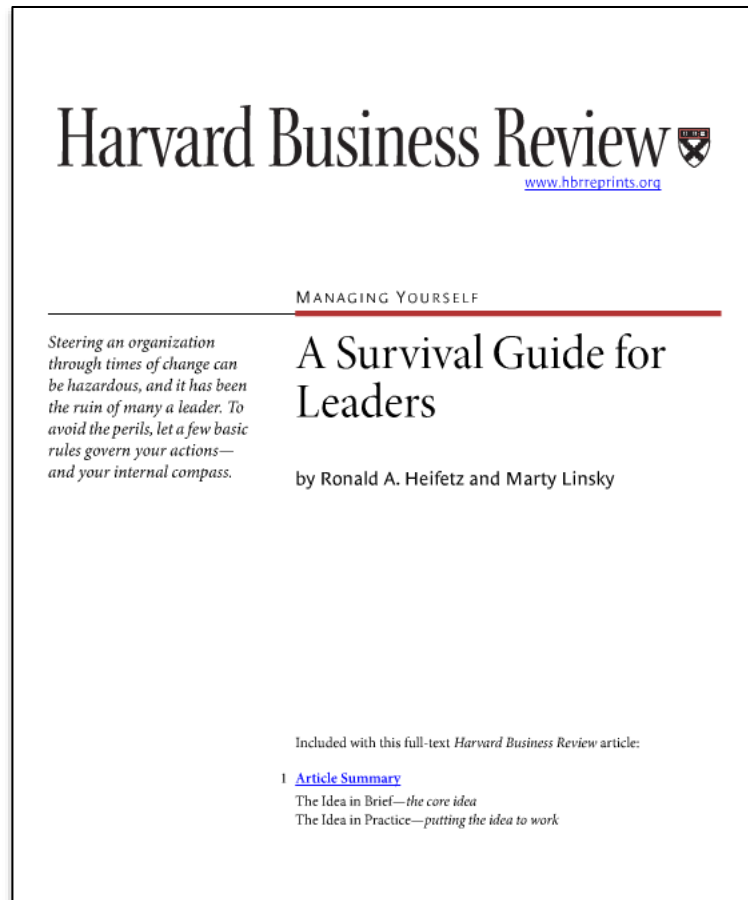


Source: B. Zimmerman based on R. Stacey

The Iceberg - A Metaphor for the Level at Which We Interact with a System



Heifetz and Linsky



Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky, “A Survival Guide for Leaders,” *Harvard Business Review*, June 2002, pp. 65-74.

Technical vs. Adaptive Challenges

Technical Challenges

- Ready made solution exists
- Someone has The Answer
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Even if they require intense skills, some expert knows exactly what to do
- Examples
 - Fixing a broken computer
 - Building a hospital
 - Brain surgery

Adaptive Challenges

- Never solved issue
- Perhaps new, never seen before
- No one's got The Answer
- Must be solved by collaboration
- Examples
 - The I-85 bridge collapse
 - Poverty
 - Health system change

Adapted from Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky, "A Survival Guide for Leaders," Harvard Business Review, June 2002, pp. 65-74.

What is Adaptive Leadership?

- Adaptive leaders learn to live with unpredictability. They spend less time fretting about the inability to establish a routine or control the future and focus more on exploiting opportunities.

Source: Developing Adaptive Leaders: The Crucible Experience of Operation Iraqi Freedom; Dr. Leonard Wong

- Adaptive leaders go through a continual process of challenge, adaptation, and learning, which readies them for the next challenge.

Source: Characteristics of Adaptive Leaders – Vizen Executive Leadership

Adaptive Leadership Definition

- Adaptive leadership is a unique combination of skills, perspective, and guided effort that enable true excellence. Adaptive leadership skills can take a leader at any level to places others cannot go. These skills are what set great leaders apart; they represent the otherwise intangible qualities that great leaders have in common.

Source: Leadership 2.0: Are You An Adaptive Leader? – Travis Bradberry PhD

Principles of Adaptive Leadership

- Get on the balcony
- Identify the adaptive challenge
- Regulate distress
- Maintain disciplined attention
- Give the work back to the people
- Protect voices of leadership from below

Adapted from Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky, "A Survival Guide for Leaders,"
Harvard Business Review, June 2002, pp. 65-74.

Putting Adaptive Leadership into Action through Adaptive Actions

Adaptive Actions



Influence decisions



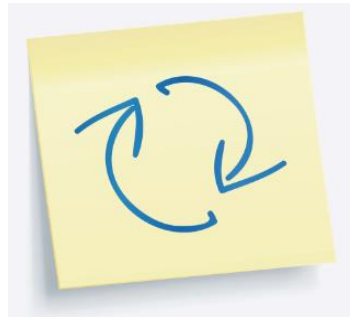
Educate others



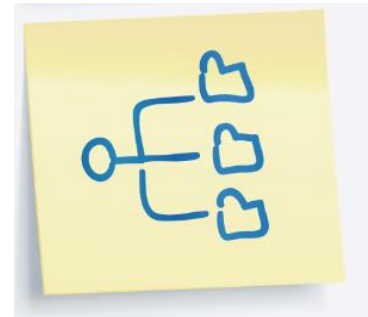
*Strategically plan
under uncertainty*



*Stay abreast of new
information*



Create new partnerships



*Build capacity: workforce,
information technology,
and care coordination*

Adaptive Action Examples

- Influence decisions
 - What tables do you need to be at to have input on states' plans for COVID-19?
- Create new partnerships
 - Who do you not typically work with who can help you achieve your goals?
- Strategically plan under uncertainty
 - What are two likely scenarios based on the best information you have now?

Adaptive Action Examples

- Stay abreast of new information
 - What health news sources do you subscribe to?
- Educate others
 - How can you educate others about the impact of your work? What do you need to say?
- Build capacity
 - Based on what you know, what capacities might you need to invest in?

Your Turn!

Thank you!

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