Jerry Yoshitomi, MeaningMatters, LLC

Leading with limited authority

'You don't have to be a person of influence to be influential.' Scott Adams (Dilbert)

This session provided the theory behind the art of leading with little authority, a situation most of us find ourselves in at some point. If we understand how to do this, we can make great changes. Think about an intentional change you made in yourself, an organisation or a project when you were not in charge. Jerry asked delegates to offer examples they could think of, using these questions to frame answers, with some examples listed.

- What were the indicators that change was necessary?
- When was it?
- What were the key factors that enabled the change?
    - Training/Skills
    - Opportunity
    - Resources/People

- Using recommendations from external consultancy to influence those in charge (further up) and see change.

- Devising a new way of communicating with internal clients.

- Breaking down a silo approach within the organization, by lobbying individual departments and gradually creating advocates and strategic alliances, tapping into individuals who were open to change.

- Changing internal attitudes to data collection and thus increasing information known about audiences (persuading front of house staff to see the value of visitor surveys).

- Finding the budget for a marketing audit, by recruiting immediate line manager, who then lobbied relevant board members. When the request went to the entire board, they passed the request.

Jerry pointed out that this means that we *do* and *can* lead with limited authority – all the time. The key is understanding the barriers and challenges, or the sources of resistance to innovation:
- Values & Previous Mission
- Social Norms
- Competitiveness
- Competency & Capacity
- Equilibrium
- Confidence

Jerry used a case study from his home town to illustrate some of these challenges in action.

> *Children were going to a local library after school, for homework clubs and similar activities. This changed the feeling of the library and increased noise levels (values and previous mission), something which upset some of the staff and older library users (the social norms). From their perspective, the library stopped being peaceful and quiet from 3pm onwards (competitiveness). The situation deteriorated, as did relations on both sides, culminating in a demand from the older users that children should only be admitted with an adult (upsetting the equilibrium). The manager went to the local authorities and requested emergency funding to address the situation. As a result, he obtained training and guides for the library (addressing librarians' lack of confidence in dealing with issues raised and increasing competence/capacity) the following week. Now the children and older users share the facilities and use the library alongside each other.*

Metrics for innovation

Systems thinking – counteracting diminished expectations (Senge). The red dot represents 'the next job' and the blue one the current job. The purple boxes show the process of taking people along with organisational innovation.
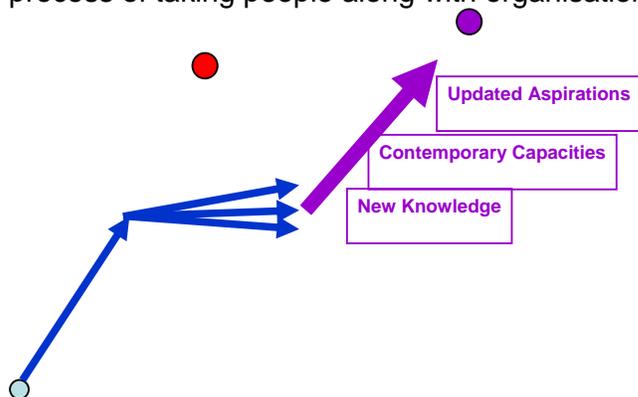

Outside-in thinking. The second metric is another way of looking at innovation, and highlights the importance of understanding driving forces. Jerry would say that it is communicators', educators' and marketers' jobs to let the rest of the organisation know about their driving forces. As you can see from the examples on the slide below, people have to have context to use these tools effectively.

A framework for outside-in thinking: The Art of Scenario Thinking for Nonprofits
http://www.musicandmedia.org/standard/pdf/what_if_1.pdf

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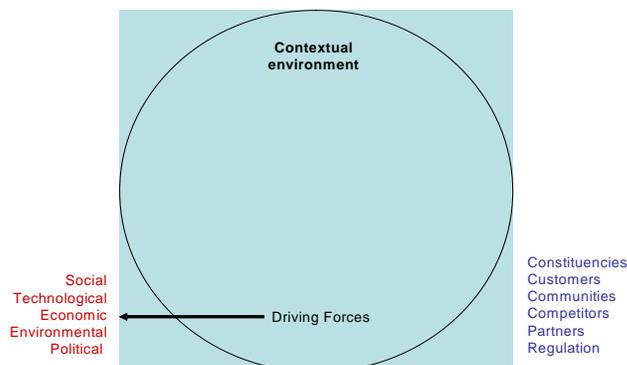
Lateral thinking models. Like de Bono's lateral thinking.

XXXXX   YYYY

1974   XXXXXXX

1986   xXXXXXX

1996   xXXXXXX

            X

2009   xXXXXXXXX
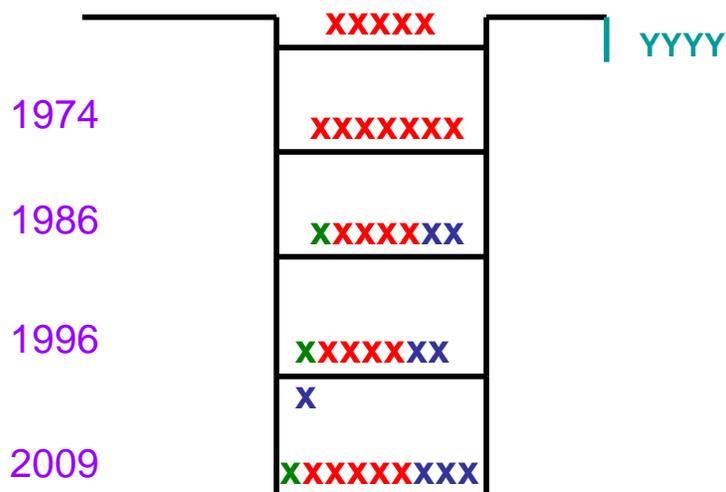
Why innovation and change is essential

What really counts is what you learn after you know it all.
Helen Hayes/John Wooden/Harry Truman

If you always do what you've always done, you'll always be what you've always been.
Anonymous

*You can't solve a problem with the same consciousness that created it.*
A. Einstein

If arts organisations continue as they are, that is, resist change and innovation, then our audiences will become static. However, catalytic leadership explores different ways of looking at 'leading'. Approximately 33% of our time might be spent leading 'downwards' (your team), 33% leading 'horizontally' (colleagues and peers), and 33% leading 'upwards', that is your managers and further up the chain.

The trick is to create different levels of consciousness appropriate to each situation. These are some of Jerry's suggestions:
- New outcome measures to evaluate programmes
- Identify the problem (w/other sources, 3rd parties). Draw attention to issues without drawing too much attention to yourself
- Identify solutions/others solving similar problems
- Identify resources for experiments – facilitate action
- Understand boss's dilemma/the pains of change, choose tactics accordingly. Don't blame or attack. Look from his/her point of view
- Short attention span? Use time wisely. Interventions simple, intelligible, relevant

- Consider where your manager sits on the innovation diffusion curve; this will help you identify the correct strategies and approaches. Stay in touch and in tune with the innovators or early adopters.

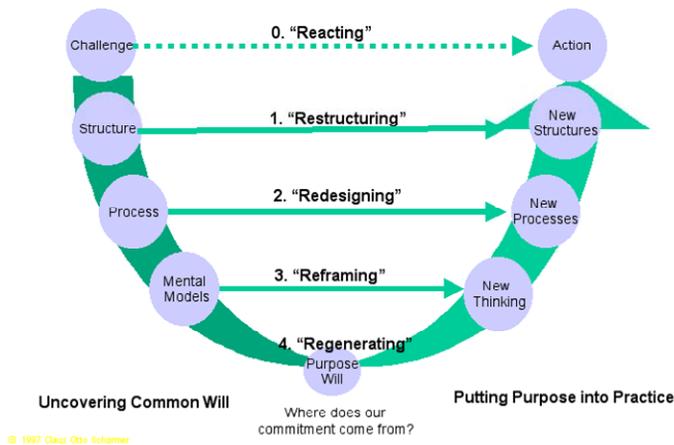| Innovators | Early Adopters | Early Majority | Late Majority | Laggards |
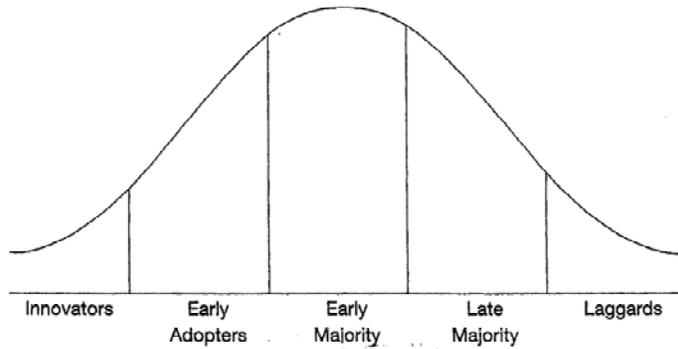
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Gerald D. Yoshitomi, C. 2005

- Finally, think about how deep a change is required in terms of the levels of behaviour (see below) before deciding how to progress your project or goal.

Figure 3: Five Levels of Behavior in Response to Change

Your role as leaders of organisational change*

Establish a sense of urgency sustain values/mission critical to org

Build a powerful guiding coalition others have ownership

Create a compelling vision of what the future can be

Communicate the vision demonstrate determination & commitment

Empower others to act by transferring ownership to a working team. Others take responsibility/credit for success

Plan for and create short-term wins so others will remain optimistic and see evidence that your vision for change is possible to achieve.

Integrate improvement into the day-to-day actions of the organization others can see the benefits of the change

Institutionalize new approaches - model new behavior

Tune into the environment - assess what is/is not working

Challenge the prevailing organizational wisdom

Learn to persevere. Perseverance comes naturally to you. Help others stick with the vision/see a change effort through to completion.

* Wingfield, Betty Henderson, *Managing Organizational Change* in Dees, Emerson & Economy, "Strategic Tools for Social Entrepreneurs," p. 288, Kanter, Rosabeth Moss, "The Enduring Skills of Change Leaders," Kotter, John, "Leading Change"

Assessing the situation and preparing for change

It is possible to adopt and adapt different metrics to help you assess the need for change, and how to create the ideal situation for persuasion. Firstly, there are questions that we can ask ourselves as individuals and professionals within an organisation. These questions can also be used to assess the strength of any consensus.

	Clear Yes	Qualified Yes	Not Sure	No
1. Do I feel strongly about the need for this?	3	2	1	0
2. Does it fit my long-held beliefs, values & convictions?	3	2	1	0
3. Have I thought about something like this for a long time, hoped for something like this?	3	2	1	0
4. Do I think that it is vital for the future of my organization and people I care about?	3	2	1	0
5. Do I get excited when I think about it, and convey excitement when I talk about it?	3	2	1	0
6. Am I convinced that this can be accomplished?	3	2	1	0
7. Am I willing to put my credibility on the line to promise action on it?	3	2	1	0
8. Am I willing to sell it to other people who might not "get" it right away?	3	2	1	0
9. Willing to make this a major focus of my activities?	3	2	1	0
10. Willing to put in my own personal time, above & beyond organizational time, to see that this happens?	3	2	1	0
11. Am I committed to seeing this through, over the long haul?	3	2	1	0

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Readiness assessment: From *Evolve,* by Rosabeth Moss Kanter

Jerry offered some more tips that he has learned over the years:

- Using permission marketing principles to make people ready to listen to ideas for change.

- Make sure you can understand the psychology of change and guide colleagues through the process.

- Tasks like re-doing the outcome measures can be a good way of setting out proposed change, for example: 'we will seek to be the best at reaching children…'

- The experience has to be positive for enough people to justify the upheaval.

- Keep the short-term wins coming (defined as between 60-90 days from conception to delivery).

- Compliment colleagues, don't criticise.

- Gradually lead up to a change action plan.

- Different people have different strengths; start to see yourself as a leader.

Barack Obama could be the ultimate role model for those attempting to lead with little authority: when his campaign began, he certainly had little authority and most thought he would never achieve his goal.

There are some simple principles of persuasion that can be adopted from Cialdini's *Influence*:

Reciprocity – create a situation of reciprocity within your organisation before making suggestions for change or innovation.

Consensus – create a group to discuss ideas and ways forward, and becoming a guiding coalition.

Authority – use others with authority to show what you can do; for example, sharing the ideas from the conference with your colleagues.

Consistency – remind yourself about what the organisation stands for and says about itself; then remind others in your organisation or group.

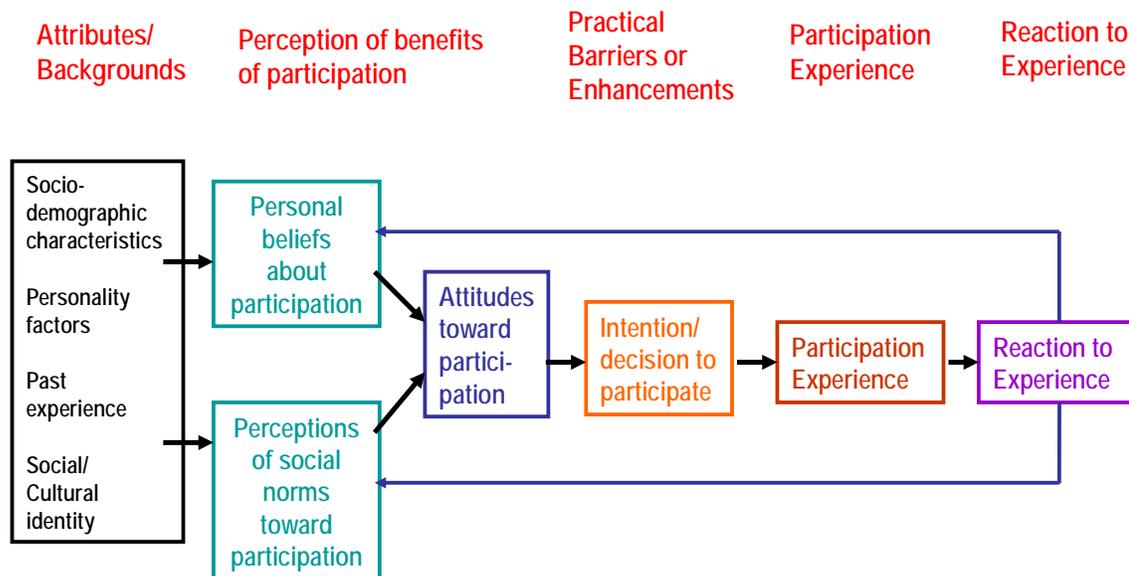**Scarcity** – create opportunities to deal with this together.

Liking – this is a corollary to Reciprocity.

The contrast phenomenon – the thinking can be flipped around by asking others: how would the world/your organisation, etc be different if you could…?

Timing – make sure you are ready for change to happen – how will you achieve that?

Another way of handling colleagues or managers so that they come along with the proposed change is through understanding behavioural models around participation (see below).

Behavioral Model of Participation (by McCarthy & Jinnett -RAND)

Attributes/ Backgrounds	Perception of benefits of participation	Practical Barriers or Enhancements	Participation Experience	Reaction to Experience

Socio-demographic characteristics

Personality factors

Past experience

Social/ Cultural identity

Personal beliefs about participation

Perceptions of social norms toward participation

Attitudes toward partici-pation

Intention/ decision to participate

Participation Experience

Reaction to Experience

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The session finished with two final points:

1.   It's easier to communicate what we do that aligns with people's existing values or goals **vs.** changing their values or goals to align with ours.

2.   Think about a superior/colleague. What are their values or goals? How might you frame methods to gain the resources to implement some of what you learned today?

Further reading:

Ronald Heifetz, *Leading with Limited Authority*, in *Leadership Without Easy Answers*
Michael Useem, *Leading Up*
Roger Fisher & Alan Sharp, *Getting it Done: How to Lead When You're Not in Charge*
Patrick Lencioni,   *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*
                Death By Meeting
Jerry Yoshitomi, *Is Knowledge in the Right Places?*