Collective Leadership: What is It, Why is It Important, and How Can You Build Capacity for It?

Presented By: Cassandra O’Neill

Collective Leadership: What Does it Mean for You?

This is for you if:

- You are excited about bringing in more voices, sharing responsibility, maximizing potential and having everyone working toward a common goal with enthusiasm.
- You are tired of talking/hearing about the “lack of leadership” and want to be part of the solution.
- You are tired of feeling like you are doing all the work, and are ready to inspire others to step up their leadership so the whole group benefits, and you get more joy back at work.

Webinar Learning Objectives:

- Understand:
  - Fundamentals of Collective Leadership
  - 6 Elements of Collective Leadership

- Be familiar with the differences between:
  - Individual Leadership
  - Collective Leadership

- Learn about resources for:
  - Self-assessment
  - Capacity building of Collective Leadership

What it isn’t - Old ideas about leadership

- Small number of “leaders” (everyone else is defined as a follower)
- Old views about people - that they need to be told what to do
- Organizations are machines

Definitions

- Collective Leadership
- Sometimes called Shared or Distributed Leadership
- Related to Self-Managing Teams
How Can Collective Leadership Be Used?

1. In a Team
2. In a Program
3. Across an Organization *
4. Within a Board of Directors
5. Multi-Organizational Collaborations
6. Collective Impact Initiatives

* Shared Leadership found to be one of the 6 practices of High Impact Nonprofits in the book Forces for Good.

Why? What are the Benefits?

1. More productivity from teams
2. Increase impact of organization
3. Sustainable Leadership - not dependent on 1 person
4. Community or System Change Goal so large that only achievable by multiple organization’s working together toward shared goal i.e. Collective Impact
5. Create unstoppable teams who deliver ambitious results

Collective Leadership -
It’s a ‘Both/And’ not an ‘Either/Or’

1. Not all or nothing - an organization can have some classical and some collective leadership
2. Can move a group from more traditional leadership model to Collective Leadership over time
3. Can start a new group with some or all of the elements

Classical vs Collective Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classical Leadership</th>
<th>Collective Leadership</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Displayed by a person's position in a group or hierarchy.</td>
<td>Identified by the quality of people's interactions rather than their position.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership evaluated by whether the leader solves problems.</td>
<td>Leadership evaluated by how people are working together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders provide solutions and answers.</td>
<td>All seek to enhance the process and make it more fulfilling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinct differences between leaders and followers: character, role, etc.</td>
<td>People are interdependent, all are active participants in the process of leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication is often formal.</td>
<td>Communication is crucial with a stress on conversation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can often rely on secrecy, deception and payoffs.</td>
<td>Values democratic processes, honesty and shared ethics. Seeks a common good.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A metaphor

Climbing a mountain

Where are you? Poll:

1. Are you already involved in a group that is using elements of Collective leadership?
2. Are you thinking about how to maximize the potential of your team or organization through adoption of Collective Leadership?
3. Are you involved with others in thinking about starting a multi-organizational effort that could benefit from Collective Leadership?
4. Are you involved in a multi-organizational effort, i.e. a collaboration or Collective Impact initiative?
6 Elements of Collective Leadership:

1. Identify Shared Goals
2. Structures and Processes for Shared Decision Making
3. Identify and Build on Strengths
4. Rotating and Sharing Roles so Team Members Can Activate Their Gifts
5. The Whole is Greater Than the Sum of the Parts: Accessing Collective Intelligence
6. Best Practices for Organizational Effectiveness

Q and A

What Does This Look Like?

Examples:
- New Coalition in Rural County - started with Collective Leadership
- Existing Group Exploring making Changes - Barriers with existing structures
  A. Board of Directors
  B. Coalition

Assess Skills and Interests of Group Members
Some Assessment Tools

- Strengthsfinder 2.0
- Emotional Intelligence 2.0
- Assessment in the book Developing a Learning Culture in Nonprofit Organizations
- Collective Leadership Assessment
  [Link to Collective Leadership Assessment]

Two types of Conflict

1. Affective Conflict:
   - Personalized confrontation
   - Destructive to relationships and teamwork

2. Cognitive Conflict:
   - Focuses on issues and ideas
   - A respectful exchange and exploration of differing and alternative views
   - Goal is to anticipate consequences and make the best possible decisions

Cognitive conflict is critical for healthy groups

[From the book The OIQ Factor: Raising your school’s organizational intelligence - How schools can become cognitively, socially, and emotionally smart.]

Assess Conflict Styles

- Individual Assessment
  - Style Matters
    [Link to Style Matters]
- Organizational Assessment
  [Link to Organizational Assessment]

Assess and Reflect on Process of Your Group

Assess Meetings
- Pluses and Wishes
- Sample meeting evaluation tool in the book Developing a Learning Culture in Nonprofit Organizations

Assess and Reflect on Process of Your Group

Assess how the group is working together toward goals - Annually or Semi-Annually

Options:
- Use Wilder Collaboration Assessment
  [Link to Wilder Collaboration Assessment]
- Make your own assessment
Assess and Reflect on Process of Your Group

One idea for maximizing these types of assessments:
Instead of people filling out a survey and looking at the results - you can do the assessment interactively.
Use flashcards with a scale like:
Not at all, Sometimes, All the time.

Decision Making

- What is the decision?
- Who is involved?
- How are they involved?

There is often very little clarity on the answers to these questions.

Issue # 1 What Kind of Decision is it?

A Tool: The Decision Making Matrix

A decision making matrix allows for an organization or team to list the key decisions that are being made and clarify who is:

- Responsible for making the decision,
- Who has authority to Approve or Veto,
- Who should be Consulted,
- Who should be Informed, and
- Who will Support the implementation of the decision.

Decision Making Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Making MATRIX (Sample Organization)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R = Responsible (for making the decision); A or V = (right to veto); C = Consult (those whose advice/inputs are needed to make decision); I = Inform (those whom are kept updated); S = Supports (those implementing decision)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Notions, Stakes, Boulders, and Tombstones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notion</th>
<th>Stake</th>
<th>Boulder</th>
<th>Tombstone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Impact</td>
<td>Low Stakes</td>
<td>Low Boulder</td>
<td>Low Tombstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Impact</td>
<td>Medium Stakes</td>
<td>Medium Boulder</td>
<td>Medium Tombstone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Impact</td>
<td>High Stakes</td>
<td>High Boulder</td>
<td>High Tombstone</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator Issues</th>
<th>Intensity of Commitment</th>
<th>Desired Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Decision Maker</td>
<td>Executive Board</td>
<td>R C I S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-level Manager</td>
<td>Director/CEO</td>
<td>R C I S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Member</td>
<td>Department Director</td>
<td>R C I S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer</td>
<td>Caseworker</td>
<td>R C I S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>R C I S</td>
</tr>
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Decision Making Process:

- Read a statement
- Example: Our collaborating partners have the same vision for young children.
- Group holds up flashcards
- Discussion
- Re-vote
- Then Record Results
Decision Making Process

One example: The Focusing Four Process

Step 1: Brainstorm
Step 2: Clarify
Step 3: Advocate
Step 4: Canvass

Video to purchase
http://www.thinkingcollaborative.com

Resources

Facilitator’s Guide to Participatory Decision Making
by Sam Kaner - http://communityatwork.com/

Decisive - by Chip and Dan Heath
http://heathbrothers.com/

Liberating Structures:
http://www.liberatingstructures.com/

Q and A

3 Capacities Identified in Recent SSIR Article: The Dawn of System Leadership

1. Helping people see the larger system of which they are a part of.
2. Fostering reflection and more generative conversations than can result in truly innovative solutions.
3. Shifting the collective focus from reactive problem solving to co-creating the future.

http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/the_dawn_of_system_leadership

Wrap-up and Resources

www.wholonomyconsulting.com
Collective Leadership Page
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Interested in a 1:1 consultation with Cassandra?

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