

ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP - EXERCISE

STARTING FROM OUR EXPERIENCE

What does the word “adaptation” bring to mind? Looking back, what past experiences involving adaptation (be it a shift in values, beliefs, attitudes or behaviors) did your team or organization go through recently?

- How would you describe this challenge?
- What did the adaptation involve? What values, beliefs, or attitudes needed to shift in order to meet the challenge?
- In this particular situation, can any individual meet the challenge or affect the change by himself?
 - Who was critical to the work?
 - Who did you need to involve/mobilize to be able to address the challenge?
- What difficulties did you face during the process?
 - What did you fear to lose if change happened?
 - What sacrifices did you have to endure?
 - What made this adaptation worthwhile?

Share your insights with a partner or within your small group.

EXPLORING THE THEORY

Note: Read input before this exercise. The most common type of leadership failure occurs when adaptive problems are treated as technical. Go through the below situations and discuss which are technical, which are adaptive, and which can be both (and how).

- Climate change and other environmental challenges
- Poverty
- Terrorism threats
- Lack of educational material in a public school
- Long waiting line in a bank
- A car breaking down
- Lousy service in a restaurant
- Agitations in a neighborhood following the arrival of displaced individuals
- Language-related communication challenges between two colleagues
- Mobilizing people in your community to recycle and manage the waste crisis
- An uncontrolled forest fire
- Accounting problems
- Securing agreement for a change in human resources policies
- Internal competition between departments
- A climate of fear and distrust within a university board
- Increase in the rate of homelessness in your country

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

In handout 1 you will find additional exercises linked to the theory of Adaptive Leadership