

Systems Leadership:

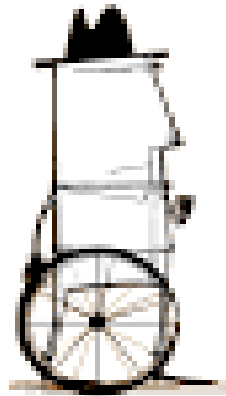
Spreading the Good News of the SDGs

A training by:



Justice
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ERRR...



**CAN'T STOP.
TOO BUSY!!**



TOO BUSY TO IMPROVE?

WorkCompass

The Pressures of Leadership

Systems Leadership: A tool for our times

Systems Leadership is a combination of knowledge, skills, and strategies used to tackle complex challenges.

It is comprised of three interconnected elements:

The **SELF**

The **COMMUNITY**

The **SYSTEM**

The Key Elements of Systems Leadership

- **The Self:** The skills of **collaborative leadership** to enable trust-building, learning, and empowered action among stakeholders who share a common goal
- **The Community:** The tactics of **coalition building and advocacy** to develop alignment and mobilize action among stakeholders in the system, both within and between organizations
- **The System:** An understanding of the **complex systems** shaping the challenge to be addressed

The CLEAR Framework for Leading Systems Change

C - Convene and Commit

System changes often occur in response to a complex problem, one that cannot be solved by a single actor or group.

In these cases, key stakeholders must engage in dialogue (supported by a trusted facilitator) to discover shared interests, define a shared goal, and commit to working together to create systemic change.

L -Look and Learn

System mapping by stakeholders helps everyone to better understand the components, actors, and dynamics that influence its current outcomes.

Mapping requires a collective, iterative effort undertaken with open minds to strengthen knowledge and identify opportunities for action.

E-Engage and Energize

- Building and maintaining stakeholder engagement in a long-term, systems-change effort requires open and continuous communication among a broad network.
- This helps to build trust, commitment and enthusiasm, which encourages the pooling of resources and capabilities in new and innovative ways.
- Stakeholders can be energized through inspiration, incentives or deadlines; and maintain momentum by defining and celebrating key milestones.

A-Act with Accountability

- Systems leaders encourage widespread multi-stakeholder action which is self-directed but drives toward a shared vision and goal.
- Galvanizing this type of distributed action across a large network requires clear goals and shared principles to help set the direction;
- Ongoing evaluation and accountability mechanisms help the group track progress and learn from experience.
- As an initiative grows in scope, establishing coordinating structures and governance systems – such as a Secretariat and multi-stakeholder Board – often becomes necessary.

R-Review and Revise

- Systems change is an ever-evolving process of adaptive experimentation, learning, growth, and change.
- Stakeholders can embrace these dynamics with an agile, flexible, innovative, and learning-centered approach.
- Setting clear goals and measurement frameworks at the start of an initiative is key to then monitor, evaluate and report progress.
- Sharing experiences and solutions can help build the process.

The Journey of System Leadership: Ten “Aha! Moments”

- No one is in control.
- It's up to us.
- Everything is connected.
- That's our “North Star.”
- To go far, go together.
- We'll find a way.
- I can make a difference.
- We need coordination.
- Wow! Change is happening!
- We're in it together, for the long haul.

The Systems Leadership Mindset

- **Keep an Open Mind:** Letting go of preconceptions and adopt a learning mindset.
- **Cultivate Shared Power:** Practicing a “servant leadership” approach, focused on supporting and empowering others to lead.
- **Listen for Insights:** Supporting stakeholders in developing, synthesizing, and sharing key insights that deepen understanding and focus action.
- **Encourage Co-Creation:** Creating breakthrough moments of insight and commitment through facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue and co-design.
- **Embrace the Mission:** Cultivating a strong emotional connection to both the mission and the stakeholder network, inspiring trust and commitment among others.
- **Contribute Generously:** Offering one’s best talents to support the network and advance the shared mission

Mainstreaming Systems Leadership: The Way Forward

- A **wider understanding of the concept and core principles** of systems leadership;
- Universal access and **availability of information, tools and training programs** to help develop and strengthen system leaders;
- Expanded **mentoring support** for and among systems leaders, to provide support and guidance in navigating challenging dynamics;
- Robust and systematic **evaluation and sharing of experiences and outcomes** of system leadership initiatives;
- High-level **leadership support** for the systems leadership approach among respected individuals from diverse sectors and regions, embracing it as a tool for empowerment and systems change.

Personal reflection:

Write 5-10 sentences describing a project in which you participated or a responsibility you have had that reflects your work in relation to the SDGs.

- What was the purpose or objective
- The process
- Your partners
- Your impact

Now, reflect on this experience in relation to the principles of systems leadership we discussed today. **Write two things you might do differently in that role to incorporate or enhance your use of these systems-change principles?**