

# Leader Development & Leader Effectiveness:

*An Exploration of How to Maximize and Sustain the  
Transfer of Leadership Learnings Back to the Job*

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# Session Objectives

- Consider how to measure Leader “effectiveness” as an outcome of Leader development or growth
- Explore the relationship between **learning** and use on the job
- Understand how belief systems control changes in Leader effectiveness.
- Identify approaches to getting sustained improvements in leader effectiveness

# Part I

## Defining Leader Effectiveness

# Some Traditional Measures of Leader Effectiveness

\$\$\$

Saved

?

Increased

Success Rate

Innovation

Less Time

Ldr Growth

**How can you tell if a leader is really more effective today than the leader was a year ago?**



# Create A Scale to Measure “Leader Effectiveness”

- So you can create a pre- and post measure to determine changes in **overall** leader effectiveness
  - That can be used with ANY leader in your Agency
- The scale will range from 1-5
- Provide *observable descriptors* to further define the 3 and 5 levels of each scale

# What We Measure

*Our measurement of Leader effectiveness assumes we know what to look for and where...*



# Paradox of Measuring Leader Effectiveness

- And it usually comes down to one of two approaches
  - Activity Measures
    - Measuring the frequency of behavioral competency use (e.g., use of “strategic thinking”)
  - Outcome Measures
    - Measuring a level of accomplishment that is considered representative of what “good” leaders do

# Paradox of Measuring Leader Effectiveness

- In our desire for “clean” and “objective” measures we focus on what we can measure
  - Downplaying the complexity that contextual and situational variables bring to High Risk Leader Challenges (HRLCs)
  - Even though most of us are responding every day primarily to these same types of factors in our environment

# Paradox of Measuring Leader Development

- HRLCs by definition imply a challenge to Leader effectiveness
  - Where a leader must find a path to success that does NOT result in the leader becoming a “casualty”
    - Loss of status, loss of resources, embarrassment, loss of influence, failure to achieve, etc.
  - Where the leader must often motivate others, while the leader is not altogether confident the approach taken will be completely successful

# Paradox of Measuring Leader Development

- In our exclusive focus on activity and outcome measures we may have missed another one
- That the more accurate measure of *Leader effectiveness* may be in the ability of the leader to **adapt** to the complexity of contextual factors found in High Risk Leader Challenges (HRLCs)
  - A process which is highly influenced by one's Style of Adaptive Thinking specifically, and one's belief systems generally

# Some Potential Adapting Indicators of Leader Effectiveness

Safe

Experimentatio

Sustainment of new  
leader approaches



Increased Courage to do  
new approaches

Observation and Reflection

New perspectives on  
situations & people

# Activity

- Discuss at your tables...
  - What do you think of this concept of measuring *Leader Effectiveness* by looking at the ability of the leader to **adapt** to ongoing *high risk Leader challenges*
  - Then, look back over the scale(s) you put together earlier to measure Leader effectiveness
    - What scale might you use to capture leadership adaptability as a measure of leadership effectiveness
    - How might you anchor such a scale
  - Choose a Reporter to provide a summary of your discussion

QUESTIONS???

QUESTIONS???

# Part II

Exploring What Influences Transfer of  
Leader Learnings Back to the Job

# Activity

Discuss at your tables...

How easy is it for leaders to use new Leader learnings back on the job ***on a sustained basis?*** (*Whether those learnings come from a Leader development event, or just insights gained in life....*)

What grabs your attention when you return to work ... where is your energy and focus drawn to?

# How Learnings are Maximized

- Modern training designs produce more and deeper learnings than 40 years ago (i.e., the 1970s)
  - Small group discussions
  - Targeted “experiential” activities
  - Learning systems design
- Trainers know there are more learnings
  - Evaluations at end of training (Level 1 & 2)
  - Demonstration of capability during the training

# What is the Rate of Transfer From What Participants Have Learned?

- Short answer – After 40 years, No one really knows
  - Very few reports on the rate of transfer
  - Kind of numbers tossed around range from 5% - 15% sustained transfer after a year
  - No data to show any more transfer from a week of PowerPoint, then a week of dialogue and activity based training

What Can Stop A Person from Using what  
they Have learned,

Through Life or Training,

Back on the Job?

# The Relationship Between Learning and Transfer

- The current working model is that **sustained\* transfer** is a natural outcome of the learning process
  - So more and deeper learnings/insights, should equate to a higher probability of sustained transfer of those learnings back to the job



*\*Sustained transfer means consistent use of the new learning on the job for one year or more.*

# The Relationship Between Learning and Transfer

- What if the relationship is not linear, but bi-polar ... like “Hot-----Cold”



- That would mean that there is a continuum between maximizing learning and maximizing Transfer
  - And that it would not be possible to maximize for both at the same time
- One would then have to choose which factor to maximize for any given Leader development event
  - You could NOT achieve both goals with the same process

# The Relationship Between Learning and Transfer

If true, then the very things we do to accelerate Leader learnings, through formal training, should also block transfer of those learnings back to the job?

# So How Might Some of These Factors Inhibit Transfer?

Factor	Learning Purpose	Source of Transfer Doubt (in Work Env.)	Type of Doubt
Experientials	Learn through a reference experience	Work experiences are much more complex	Contextual
Small group dialogue	Peer support system for learning & change	May not have a peer support system @ work	Capability
Forgiving learning environment	Learn from mistakes in safe environment	May be unsafe to make mistakes at work	Contextual
Equalize roles and power	Reduce “positional” learning inhibitors	Leader may not support use at work	Contextual
Expert Model / Lecture	Provide clarifying models & theories	Ability level may not be good enough (vis a vis the expert level)	Capability
Create a non-threatening env.	Easier to learn when not anxious about use	Disregards emotions of being judged by others	Motivation
Graduation / Certificates	Provide closure to training	Sense of closure may lower need to use	Motivation

**Let's Take a detour**

The Zeigarnik Effect

# Zegarnik Effect

- Zegarnik was a researcher in Eastern Europe
- Discovered that waiters could remember everything you ordered UNTIL the bill was paid
- Extended this research to identify what helps or hold back motivation to complete something (back on the job)

# Zegarnik Effect

- Effect #1
  - If you care deeply about something being successful. It is immediate, and it is completed, you no longer involuntarily think about it.
    - *You have no motivation to do more with it*
- Effect #2
  - If you care deeply about something being successful, it is immediate, and it is NOT complete, you will involuntarily continue to think about it
    - *You are deeply motivated to resolve the issue in order to both be successful and NOT become a casualty*
    - E.G., thoughts about work that keep you up at night, even though you tell yourself to stop thinking about it

# Zegarnik Effect

- So when we have graduation ceremony at the completion of a leadership training program ..
- We effectively maximize completion (closure) for the participants ...
  - *Thus resulting in our minimizing any motivation they may have to apply what they learned back on the job!!!*

**Now Back to the  
Presentation**

# The Relationship Between Learning and Transfer

So if the learning process can have the consequence of blocking transfer ...

...there must be another factor needed to complete the transfer of Leader learnings back to the job...

# The Relationship Between Learning and Transfer

- What if there is a missing step in the equation

## Learning x Adaptation = Sustained Transfer

- That would mean that *the full Transfer process requires two distinct steps, not one!*
  - *The closer either of these steps are to “zero”, the less Sustained Transfer occurs!*
- If we really want to improve rates of sustained transfer we need to have a more formal approach to helping people “unpack” and adapt their Leader learnings back to the job

# Proposed Elements of Transfer

**Learning**

*(Packing In)*

**X**

**Adaptation**

*(Un-packing)*

- **Learning** is the process of “**packing in**” or gaining understandings/insights of how to use a specific knowledge, skill or ability (i.e., the **content** of WHAT to do)
- **Adaptation** is the process of “**unpacking**” those understandings and using them in **context** of a job
  - So you are successful
  - So you DO NOT become a “casualty”

# How These Elements Effect Our Approach To Transfer

**Learning**  
*(Packing In)*

**X**

**Adaptation**  
*(Un-packing)*

- **When a person is uncomfortable using what they are capable of doing back on the job...**
  - In a “**Packing In**” framework, the person stays the same (in terms of their beliefs of what can or cannot work successfully) and waits for the environment/situation to change in a way that matches their comfort zone (as dictated by their current beliefs)
  - In an “**Unpacking**” framework the environment/situation remains the same, and the person changes their beliefs, and so their comfort zone, in order to find the perspective that will allow them to be successful in the current “as-is” situation.

# The Different Natures of Packing and Unpacking

## Packing In

- **Outside in**
- Expert focus
- Content Orientation
- Success defined by level of technical proficiency
- **Critical process is analytical thinking**
- Works at skill level
- **Can learn in compressed time**

## Unpacking

- **Inside out**
- Ally/Peer focus
- Context Orientation
- Success defined by effectiveness back on the job
- **Critical process is reflective thinking**
- Works at belief system level
- **Can adapt only at own pace “bake the cake”**

# Packing In

The process by which we become **CAPABLE** to use **different behaviors on the job**

The consequence of accelerated learning, is that it often is done out-of-context to the back home job context and culture ...

Which includes such factors as:

- What will others think of this new approach?
- What style should I use with this approach?
- How do I know it will be effective in our work culture?

# Un-Packing

The process by which we **ADAPT our CAPABILITY to work back** on the job ...

...with an approach (or style) that allows to both be successful and NOT become a “casualty”...

To Unpack successfully usually requires a change in what we **BELIEVE** is possible to do...

...so that we have **confidence** to use it in the workplace on a sustained basis

# The Road to Increased Leader Effectiveness



**Unpacking to  
adapt learning to  
job context**



**Choice to not  
use on the job  
(Unless the job  
situation changes  
to fit comfort zone)**

**Context of job  
challenges use  
of Leader  
learnings**



**Packing In of  
Leader Learning  
Content**



# Community Café

- In your table groups discuss the following questions...
  - What did you hear?
  - What are your reactions to what you heard?
  - What further questions of understanding do you have?

QUESTIONS???

QUESTIONS???



## Part III

# The Role of Belief Systems In the Adaptation (Unpacking) of Leader Learnings

# Activity

- Find a partner
- Begin when instructed

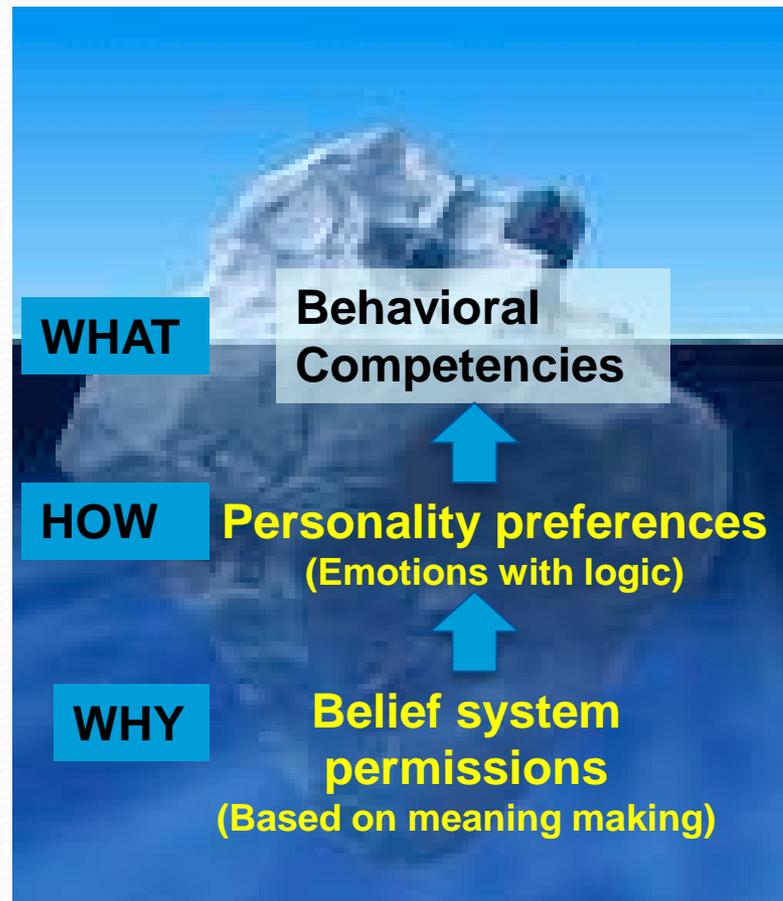
# Role of Belief Systems In Adaptation

- Belief systems give us permission to do, or not do, pursuits in life
- There are multiple permissions under any activity we do (or choose not to do...
  - With what person(s) to do it with
  - When to do it
  - In what settings to do it
  - How often to do it
  - To what degree to do it, Etc.

# Activity

- Discuss in your table groups...
- What are some examples of beliefs you hold that give you “permission” to take effective Leader actions at work ...
  - What is the belief and the related Leader action(s)
  - Do all other leaders you know give themselves “permission” to do these things ?
    - If not, what might their belief system be giving them permission to do instead?

# Causal-Relationship of Leader Beliefs and Actions



# Role of Belief Systems In Adaptation

*In many ways, our belief systems form our personal map of what routes in life are effective and appropriate to follow, and which ones are not.*



*Often, when we have new Leader insights, they do not fit neatly into the current path we are following ...*

*It is a different route than what we have done in the past...*

# Role of Belief Systems In Adaptation

*And so if we truly want to use what we learned on a sustained basis...*

*We have to **adapt** first by finding a belief structure that will give us permission to use the **content** of what we have learned in the **context** of our job*

*This belief must provide confidence that using the new Leader approach will be effective, impactful, and an acceptable approach at work.*

# What it Really Takes

# Ingredients for Adaptive Belief Change

- A state of frustration on an issue that will not go away
  - Must be something you really want to resolve!
- A critical higher value or goal that is being blocked by the frustrating situation
  - It is unacceptable to just keep dealing with all the complexity (i.e., to just keep spinning the plates)



# Ingredients for Adaptive Belief Change

- An **ally** that played the role of questioner
  - So that you could find a **reflective space** in which to reformulate your belief system around this issue
- The the Ally **DID NOT**
  - Be the Expert that provided the ANSWER
  - Or be the critic that just DIS-COURAGED



# Ingredients for Adaptive Belief Change

- When these three ingredients converge ...
  - Frustration that seems ongoing
  - Higher value or goal you desperately want but seems blocked by the attention needed to, or dynamics of, the current situation
  - An Ally that asks you questions that help you to re-consider your current perspective (i.e., belief system)



# Ingredients for Adaptive Belief Change

## “Baking the Cake”

- Then the person can take the emotional and cognitive **HEAT** produced by these ingredients (i.e., **frustration blocking goal desire**)
- That has by now loosened the bonds of permissions that hold the current belief(s) together around this situation/issue
- And by considering the Ally’s questions
  - Use the process of **reflective thought** to **COOL** down and re-shape the belief permissions
    - Into a more adaptive form that better fits the situation/issue at hand



# Activity

- In your table groups...
- Think of a time when you went through a major change in your life, one that took real effort to introduce and sustain?
  - To what degree were the three elements of belief adaptive change present
    - Ongoing frustration with a situation/person(s)
    - Higher value or goal being blocked
    - An Ally that asked you the reflective questions that challenged your current beliefs about this situation
  - Share your observations with your table group

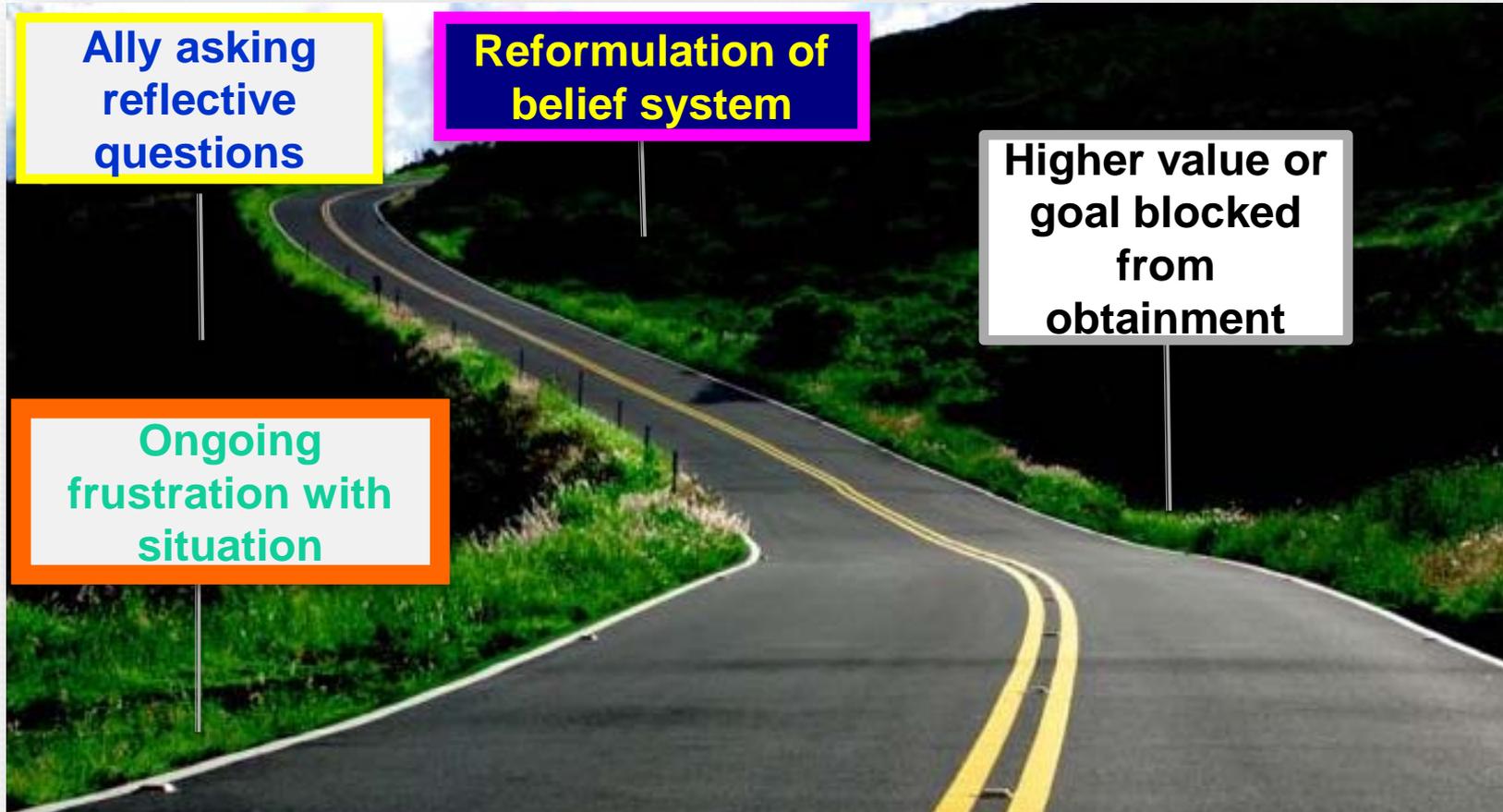
# *The Process of Adaptive Belief System Change*

**Ally asking  
reflective  
questions**

**Reformulation of  
belief system**

**Higher value or  
goal blocked  
from  
obtainment**

**Ongoing  
frustration with  
situation**



QUESTIONS???

QUESTIONS???

## Part IV

# Proposed Approaches to Increasing Leader Effectiveness

*By Maximizing the Unpacking of  
Leader Capability Back to the Job*

# The Different Nature of Unpacking

- So Packing-In is an outside-in approach
  - That allows you to learn what experts have found it
  - Without the need to make any adjustments in your belief systems
    - That is, you can learn it whether you believe in it or not
- But Unpacking is an Inside-Out process
  - That can only be done if you choose to make an adaptive change in your belief system
    - People can help you, but only you can do it

# Some Proposed Elements to Maximize Un-Packing

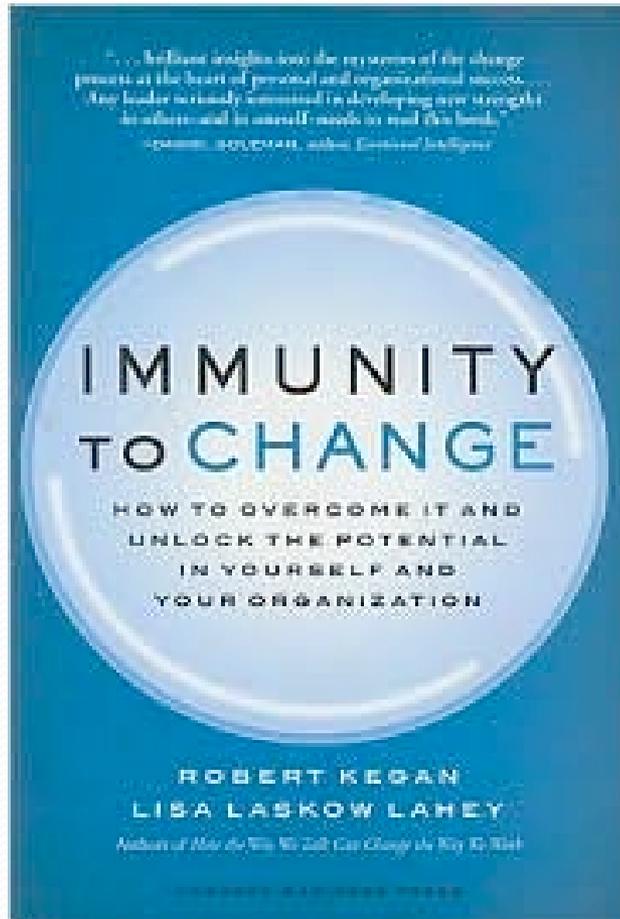
- Participants must be invested in **resolving ongoing frustration** around their Leader challenge – need “skin in the game”
- Participants must have a **highly valued goal** they believe is critical to achieve if only they can resolve this ongoing frustration.
- Participants use each other as **allies** (peer coaches) to challenge their current belief systems
- Participants work exclusively from **reflective thinking on their experiences**
  - No new learnings, models, theories, etc. are introduced
- Success in unpacking is defined by **sustained changes** back on the job

# Current Methods to Accelerate the Unpacking Process

- Awareness of Conflicting or Competing Belief Systems
  - Guided workshop to uncover beliefs around a Leader challenge
- Cooling Down
  - Leader Ally Groups meeting over a period of time
- Creating Heat
  - Direct challenges by a facilitator/coach to deeply held beliefs systems around Leader

# Awareness of Conflicting or Competing Belief Systems

Robert Kegan  
& Lisa Lahey



# Detecting Competing Beliefs Chart

Visible Commitment	Doing/Not Doing Instead	Hidden Competing Commitments	Big Assumptions
		<div data-bbox="915 458 1222 729" style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"><b>Worry Box</b></div>	

# Detecting Competing Beliefs Chart

Visible Commitment	Doing/Not Doing Instead	Hidden Competing Commitments	Big Assumptions
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Be a better delegator

I let new opportunities distract me, adding to my list

I don't ask people to help me

I stay late at work to get everything done

I'm committed to being independent and capable.

(Worry: I fear if I don't do the work, I will be seen as less able).

I'm committed to always finding a way to get the work done.

(Worry: I fear if I don't do it, it won't get done right.)

I will lose my self-respect if I am dependent on others and unable to do many things well.

If I don't find ways to get things done, I'll stop being valuable, and my career will be over.

# Cooling Down: Accelerating the Unpacking Process through Ally Groups

- Leader ally groups meet in small groups of from 4-6 participants over 6 months
  - The “unpacking” process requires a sustained effort
- Meetings once every month, for 2 hours each
  - Harnessing the power of natural allies to support the unpacking process
- Structured process to maximize the need of participants to move into reflective thinking after each meeting

# Outcomes for Leader Ally Groups

- A successful outcome is measured if participants:
  - Gain deeper insight into what Leader effectiveness means
  - Gain confidence to apply this new wisdom back on the job
  - Are able to translate this confidence into real actions or decisions
  - Learn to observe and reflect from a number of perspectives on work outcomes
    - e.g., quantity, quality, functional, organizational-wide, etc.

# Some Choices to Consider Back on the Job

- Leader Effectiveness Focus
  - Leader Learning/Making Capable (Packing in) or
  - Leader Adaptation/Sustained Use (Unpacking)
- Leader Effectiveness Assessment/Measurement
  - Activity Measures
    - Behavioral Competency Use/Frequency
  - Outcome Measures
    - Achievements
  - Adaptation Indicators
    - Reflective Thinking Changes Around HRLCs (Adaptation)
  - Other?

# Possible Next Steps to Maximize Transfer in Your Organization

- Form a pilot Leader Ally Group
- Conduct a workshop on how competing belief systems can affect a Leader's ability to adapt
- Have a pilot workshop to introduce “heat” around current Leader beliefs

# Community Café

- In your table groups discuss the following questions...
  - What did you hear?
  - What are your reactions to what you heard?
  - How might you safely test out if *unpacking* really does help to increase leader effectiveness back on the job?
    - Consider such Leader contexts as
      - 1:1 crucial conversations
      - Team/Work group situations
      - Organizational-wide change activities

QUESTIONS???

QUESTIONS???

**Thank You for your Time**