

# Adaptive Change Workshop

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- Founder and President of Integral Leadership Design (since 1998)
- Leadership Development Consultant, Certified Change Management Practitioner and Certified Coach, with extensive training in Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Development and Group Dynamics
- Forbes and Training Industry Magazine Contributor
- Over 20 years experience providing:
  - Strategic advice to help organizations succeed in times of change
  - Facilitating employee engagement during transitions
  - Helping leaders to boost their leadership presence, and creating healthy, inclusive, and respectful work environments



**“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.”**

— Viktor E. Frankl



# AGENDA

1 The Case for Adaptive Change

2 Adaptive Change and Leadership

3 Change Curve: The Process of Transition

4 Building Personal Adaptive Capacity

# OBJECTIVES

- Explore the implications of living in the VUCA world
- Understand key concepts of adaptive change and leadership
- Appreciate the different stages of the change process
- Describe ways to increase resilience and build personal adaptive capacity



# Warm-Up: Changes Ahead

- What are the biggest changes facing your industry?
- What excites you about these changes?
- What scares you about these changes?



# Warm-Up: Your Experience with Change



Think about a change you have experienced that went well



Now, think about a change you experienced as 'painful'

What contributed to the difference?  
What would have made the 'painful' change a more positive experience?



# 1. THE CASE FOR ADAPTIVE CHANGE



# Global Change...Requires Adaptation

We live in a VUCA world: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yg\\_BLNSYZU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9yg_BLNSYZU)





VUCA	What it means	Example
<b>Volatility</b>	Rapid and unexpected change	Prices fluctuate after a natural disaster
<b>Uncertainty</b>	Lack of predictability and knowing everything fully	Competitor's product launch muddies the future of the business
<b>Complexity</b>	Many parts being interconnected and interdependent	Doing business in many countries, all with unique regulatory environments and cultural values
<b>Ambiguity</b>	Lack of clarity and the possibility of multiple interpretations or outcomes	Moving into immature or emerging markets

Source: <https://www.tothepointatwork.com/article/vuca-world/>



# Responding to VUCA

1. How do you see VUCA impacting your work? Your profession? Your career?
2. What do you need to do to effectively respond to and thrive in the VUCA world? What mindsets or behaviours do you need to shift?



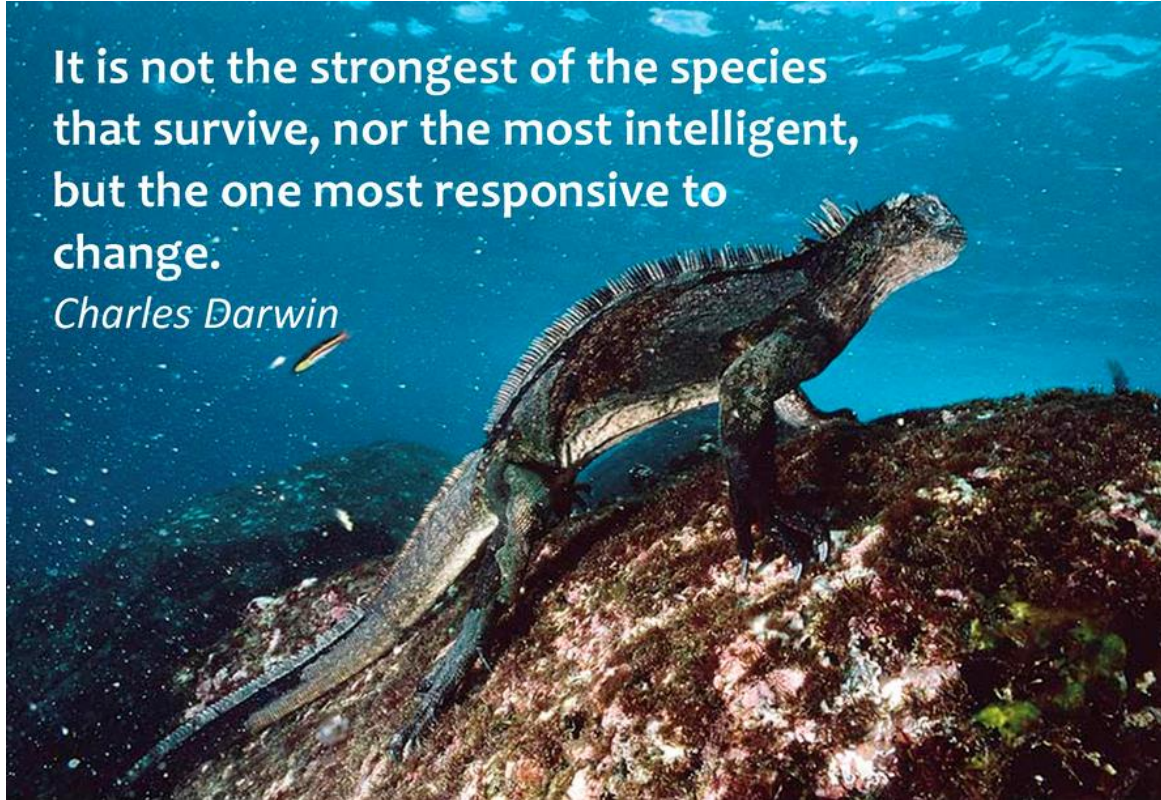
## 2. ADAPTIVE CHANGE AND LEADERSHIP



# Adaptive Change

It is not the strongest of the species  
that survive, nor the most intelligent,  
but the one most responsive to  
change.

*Charles Darwin*



# Adaptive vs. Technical Challenge

Technical Challenge	Adaptive Challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has a known solution that can be implemented by current know-how</li><li>• Can be solved through authoritative expertise and current organizational structures and procedures</li><li>• For example, installing a new software system, or taking your car to the mechanic</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has no clear or known answer; can only be addressed by developing new capabilities</li><li>• Requires learning, challenging beliefs, letting go of entrenched ways, tolerating losses and generating new capacity to thrive</li><li>• For example, shifting organizational culture, or changing driving habits to be more cautious</li></ul>



## Addressing adaptive challenges requires:

- Inviting diverse points of view
- Challenging existing assumptions
- Experimenting and trying new things
- Thinking creatively
- Facing some loss
- Working through conflict and discomfort
- Learning new competencies
- Focusing on people rather than tasks



# Adaptive Leadership

- Adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle adaptive challenges and thrive.
- Successful adaptation:
  - ✓ Enables capacity to thrive in a new environment
  - ✓ Builds on the past rather than jettisons it
  - ✓ Occurs through experimentation
  - ✓ Relies on diversity
  - ✓ Generates loss, which can be painful
  - ✓ Takes time



*The most common cause of failure in leadership is produced by treating **adaptive** challenges as **technical** problems.*

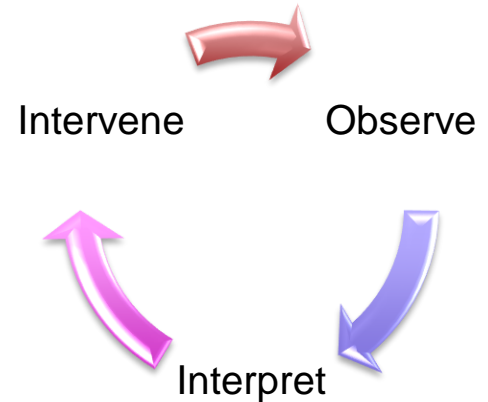
~ Ronald Heifetz ~



# Adaptive Leadership

Adaptive leadership is an iterative process that involves three key activities:

1. Observing events and patterns
2. Interpreting what you are observing
3. Designing interventions



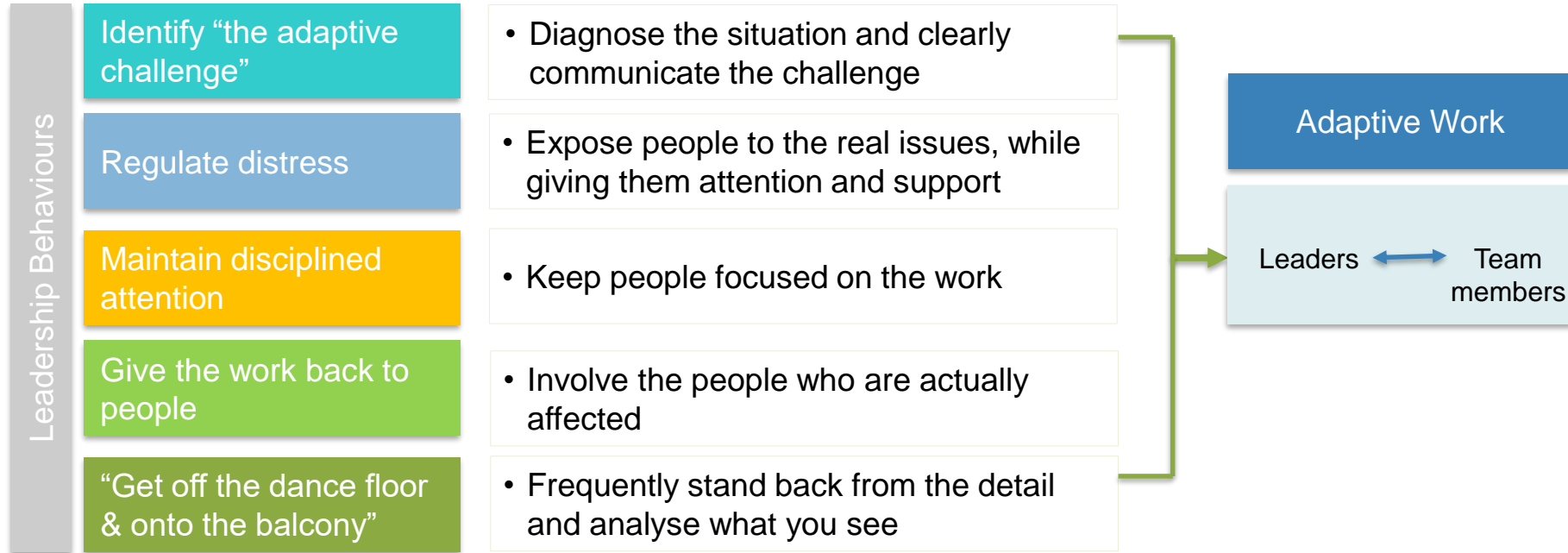
Where do you spend your time?

Do you spend sufficient time observing and interpreting before implementing a solution?





# Adaptive Leadership



# Practicing Adaptive Leadership

1. Thinking about the current changes facing your profession, what do you fear losing?
2. What is one thing you can do (one new behavior you can adopt) to become an adaptive leader (lead yourself and others through adaptive change?)

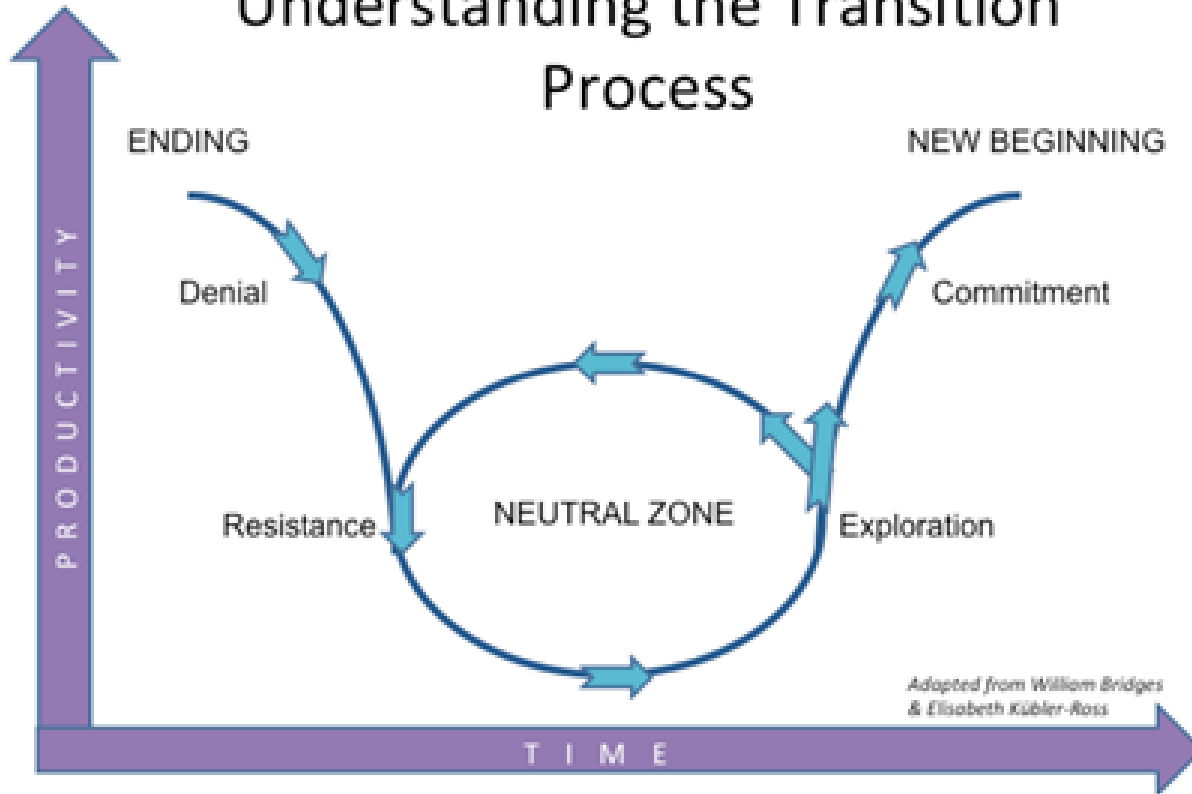


### 3. CHANGE CURVE THE PROCESS OF TRANSITION



# Change Curve

## Understanding the Transition Process



## At the Heart of Resistance is our Fear of Loss:

- Humans are creatures of habits
- Habits are learned behaviours with predictable outcomes
- Change forces us to confront the unknown and unlearn the way we did things before
- Even if our current ways are sub par they are predictable and comfortable to us – so we resist changing because we fear a loss of competency
- When things change we worry about what we might lose



# Actions to help people through change

## **Denial**

- Give people information they need to make the change work for them
- Tell people what is changing and what is not changing
- Determine how change will affect people and other groups they interact with
- Explain the need for change

## **Resistance**

- Ask people what their concerns are and respond as truthfully and transparently as possible
- Allow people to mourn their loss so that they can move forward
- Make sure people are taking care of themselves



# Actions to help people through change

## Exploring

- Encourage people to gain greater sense of control by getting them involved, setting short term success goals and minimizing personal changes (if possible)
- Keep communicating as new information becomes available
- Team development activities
- Reframe the negatives into opportunities

## Commitment

- Help people set their personal career objectives
- Provide “low-risk” settings for people to practice new ways of doing things for quick successes
- Celebrate small and big successes



Thinking about a change you/your team are experiencing:

1. Where are you on the change curve?
2. What can you do to help yourself/your team advance along the change curve?

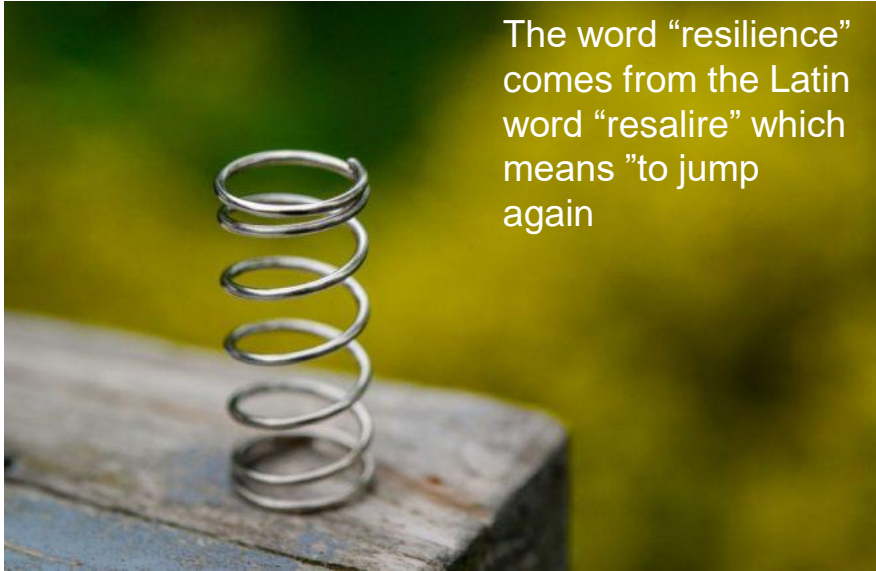




# 4. BUILDING PERSONAL ADAPTIVE CAPACITY



# Resilience



The word “resilience” comes from the Latin word “resalire” which means “to jump again”

- Resilience is the ability to “bounce back” in the face of adversity
- Resilient people understand the difference between Pressure and Stress:
  - **Pressure** - external demand in the environment – VUCA
  - **Stress** - what people do with that pressure in their minds



# Resilience in a VUCA World

Personal resilience in a VUCA world is characterized by:

- Maintaining personal well-being
- Remaining goal focused

Maintain Personal Well-Being	Remain Goal-Focused
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Connect with others</li><li>• Be active</li><li>• Keep learning</li><li>• Give to others</li><li>• Be mindful</li><li>• Remain curious</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shut out distractions and urges</li><li>• Identify root causes while tackling issues</li><li>• Have a positive outlook and believe that things can change for the better</li><li>• Believe you have control over the direction of your life – <b>focus on what you can influence</b></li></ul>





Think “Both/And” rather than “Either/Or”

Technical Challenge – “Either/Or”	Adaptive Challenge – “Both/And”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One right answer</li><li>• If one perspective is “right”, those who disagree are wrong</li><li>• Independent parts</li><li>• Solution has an end point</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Multiple right answers</li><li>• If one perspective is “right”, those who disagree may also be right</li><li>• Interdependent parts</li><li>• Solution is ongoing</li></ul>



# Exercise: Three Good Things

Focusing on things that go well increases positivity and builds resilience

Try this simple exercise for one week:

- Each day, before you go to sleep:
  - Write down 3 things that went well that day
  - Reflect on why they went well



# Your Adaptive Capacity

1. What are some ways you can increase your adaptive capacity?
2. How do you maintain your personal well-being and remain goal-focused?



# Wrap-Up and Next Steps

1. What are your key take-aways from this workshop?
2. Knowing what you know now, what might you do differently to lead yourself and others through change?



# Thank You!

# Merci!

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