

# Rethinking Leadership For Large-Scale Change Insights From Research & Practice

Garrett Groves, Texas Student Success Center Research Fellow  
Alison Kadlec, Sova

TEXAS GUIDED PATHWAYS INSTITUTE  
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# Changing the Conversation about Leadership

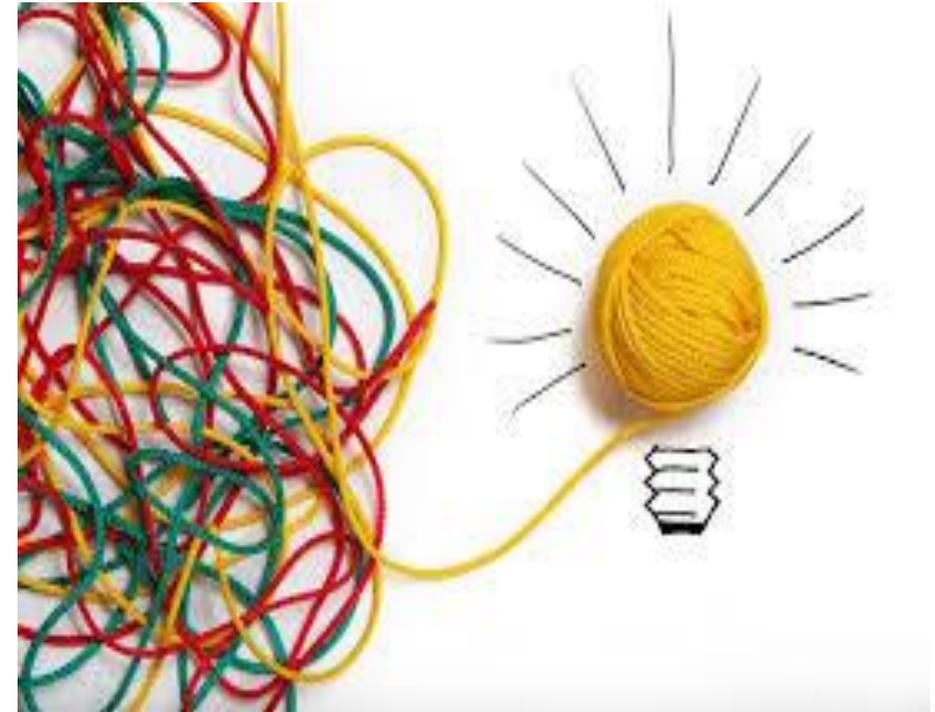
(in 60 minutes!)

## Key Questions:

1. In your experience, when you think of a great leader what comes to mind?
2. Have you ever been part of a great team? What made it great?

## Core Concepts:

- ✓ Beyond Easy Answers: Adaptive Problems & Solutions
- ✓ Beyond the Hero: Modern Leadership Theory 101



*“The most common leadership failure stems from trying to apply **technical solutions to adaptive challenges.**” –Heifetz*

## Technical Problems

- ▶ Easy to identify and define
- ▶ Clear solution (tried & tested)
- ▶ Solved by expertise or authority (by fiat)
- ▶ Requires small changes within clear boundaries
- ▶ People are natural receptivity to technical solutions

## Adaptive Challenges

- ▶ Both the problem, as well as the solution(s), are difficult to define and require the insight of multiple actors
- ▶ Solution requires the insight of those closest to the problem
- ▶ Expertise and authority aren't enough to get it done
- ▶ Raise hard trade-offs and require careful consideration of values as well as facts.
- ▶ People are naturally unsettled by adaptive challenges because of the inherent uncertainty

# Shared and Distributed Leadership Theory

## Centralized Teams



## Adaptive Teams



# Domains of Shared Leadership

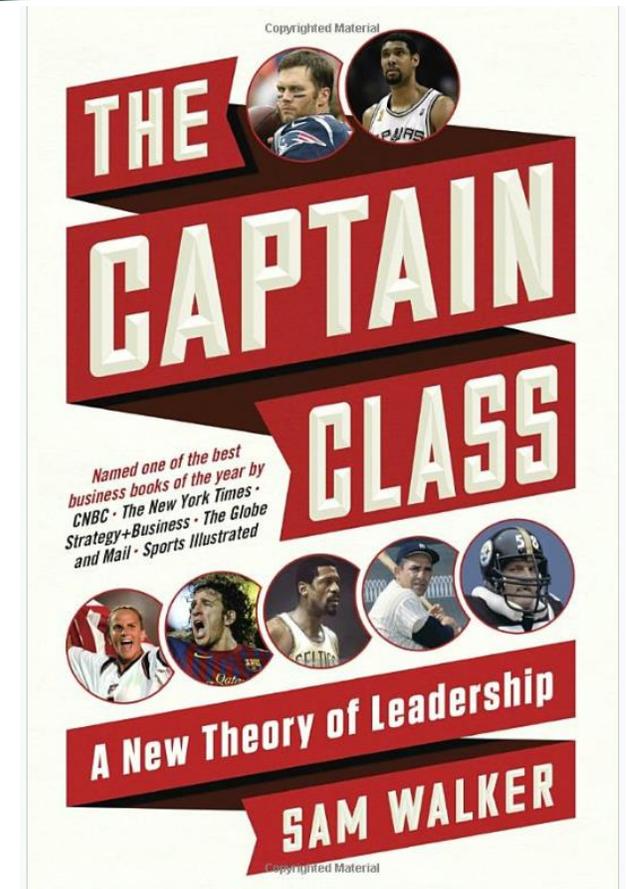


- 1. Meaningfully Participative Decision Making**
  - a) included before, not after decisions are made
  - b) expertise of faculty & staff built into process
- 2. Genuine 2-Way Communication**
  - a) creating space for disagreement
  - b) multiple channels for listening
- 3. Authentically Distributed Power & Leadership**
  - a) frontline faculty & staff included in design and lead implementation
  - b) feedback loops prioritize perspectives of those on the ground.

# Lessons from Elsewhere: Considering Teams, Rethinking Leadership

What Resonates? What Doesn't? What Can We Learn?

1. Extreme doggedness & focus
2. Testing the limits of the rules
3. A willingness to do thankless jobs in the shadows
4. A low-key, practical and democratic communication style
5. Motivates others with passionate nonverbal displays
6. Strong convictions and the courage to stand apart
7. Ironclad emotional control



# CULTIVATING ADAPTIVE TEAMS

## Core Elements

Clear  
Objectives  
& Healthy  
Culture of Data  
Use

Ethos of  
Creativity, Risk-  
Taking & Mutual  
Support

Inclusive,  
Deliberative  
Communication

Silo Spanning  
Membership &  
Competency

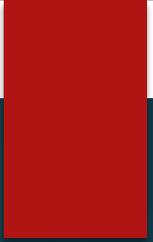
Authentically  
Shared Decision  
Making

Productive  
Persistence,  
Resilience  
Optimism

Which elements are most important?

Which are easiest and hardest to cultivate in self and others?

What's missing?



# Thank you!

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