Tools for the Balancing Act

David M. Limardi, MPA, CM
Robert R. Kiely, MPA, CM
Domains of Leadership

I. NONPERSONAL
   Objective & Unique

II. NONPERSONAL
    Objective & General

III. ORGANIZATION
     Subjective & General

IV. PERSONAL
    Subjective & Unique

INDIVIDUAL
Leadership Situations

**Type 1**
- Clear Problem
- Clear Solution
- Leader/Expert Performs the Work
- Intellectual Challenge
- Technical Work

**Type 2**
- Clear Problem
- Requires Learning
- Shared Responsibility for the Work
- Intellectual and Emotional Challenges
- Technical and Adaptive Work

**Type 3**
- Problem and Solution Require Learning
- Group Works / Leader Facilitates
- Intellectual and Emotional Challenges
- Adaptive Work

“Leadership Without Easy Answers”
Ronald A. Heifetz
Alignment

Work Tasks

Relationship Tasks

Bonds

Fits

Relationship Goals

Goals

David Morrison, MD
Goals & Priorities

- Elected Officials Goals & Priorities
- Professional Managers Goals & Priorities
  
  \((\text{Internal & External})\)
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### “DEFINING SUCCESS” EO

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## “ROLE OF MANAGER” EO/MGR

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Survey Items: Please rank the following criteria based on how important they are in defining a successful local government organization... and Please rank the following criteria based on how important they are in defining a successful community...

Ranked Highest by Role Type and Position Type

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Survey Item: Please rank the following criteria based on the extent to which the position of professional local government manager contributes to them...

Ranked Highest by Role Type and Position Type

- High functioning infrastructure
- Open communications and a process for civic engagement
- Reliable service delivery
- Safe and healthy environment
- Culture for high quality customer service
- Positive community reputation
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- Professional development
- Ethical organizational culture
- Innovative organizational culture
- Low employee turnover

Roles Internal to Local Government

Roles External to Local Government

Management Roles:
- Elected officials
- Professional local government managers

Leadership Roles:
- Elected officials
- Professional local government managers
Survey Item: Please rank the following roles based on the extent to which the professional local government manager should assume them...

Mean Rank of Response Options by Position

- Manager of technical, task-oriented, results in the community
- Manager of technical, task-oriented, results inside the local government unit
- Leader of adaptive, interpersonal, communications in the community
- Leader of adaptive, interpersonal, communications in the local government unit
Takeaways

• **Operate in Ambiguity, Thrive in Uncertainty**
  • The Criteria for Success are Always Changing

• **Ability to Deal with Difficult Problems**
  • Do the Hard Work vs. “No Mob” Mentality

• **Anticipate/Accept the Changing Expectations of your Role**
  • Are You Leading or Reacting?
Critical Strengths Assessment

- Total Participants: 30 Professionals
- Gender: 80% male - 20% female
- Age: 45 avg.
- Tenure: 47% < 10yrs. 20% 10 to 20 yrs. 33% > 20 yrs.
### “Tolerance of Ambiguity”

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**High**
- Functions well in ambiguity
- Accurate perceptions & thinking remains strong
- Important for planning, change management
- Aware of own vulnerabilities
- Non-defensive
- May not realize others need structure
- Can be seen as confusing, aloof, confused, or uncaring

**Low**
- Needs structure to perceive issues accurately
- Without structure:
  - Feel distressed
  - All or none thinking
  - Miss interpersonal details
- When stressed, gets structure from technical work & can fail with interpersonal & strategic issues
### Perceptions

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#### “Task Perception Over Relationship”

**Task**
- Task focused & doesn't get distracted by relationships
- Can get so task focused misses relationships and is insensitive to them
- Gets job done, but may leave relationships issue in the wake

**Relationships (Non-personal as well as personal)**
- Perceives relationships
- May get so focused on the relationships does not perceive task at hand
- May miss the opportunities for immediate action
Practical Problem Solving

- Uses accumulated knowledge to find practical solutions
- Solves business challenges
- Pragmatic

Predicting Social Environment

- Predicts behavior from details
- Predicts impact of own personality on others

Helps:
- In groups, both as leader & follower
- Negotiations & politics
Innate Affects
Silvan Tompkins

Positive
- Interest-Excitement
- Enjoyment-Joy

Neutral
- Surprise-Startle

Negative
- Fear-Terror
- Distress-Anguish
- Anger-Rage
- Shame-Humiliation
- Contempt
- Disgust
Shame Prone

High
- Experiences more shame than normal
  Impact:
  - Shy with people don’t know well
  - Undermines self confidence
  - May be emotionally remote
  - Failure particularly difficult to experience
  - Difficulty sharing personal information
  Inhibits:
  - Speaking up, particularly about feelings
  - Being playful

Normal amount & sensitivity to shame
- Comfortable with other people & helps them be comfortable
- Comfortable receiving and giving feedback
**Emotional Energy**

*High*
- Has strong feelings
- Emotionally labile at times
- **Feelings may cloud judgment**
- Conflict may be a problem
- May miss others’ discomfort with emotions

*Low*
- Stress and depression can cause this
- Emotionally depleted
- Narrow swing of emotions
Excessively Competes
• Problems with sharing vs. competing
• Difficulty striking balance between competing & sharing
• Difficulty sharing authority with subordinates
May avoid competing when it is necessary
• Vulnerable to shame and envy

Perfectionist
• Excessive personal standards & sense of responsibility
• Personal standards too demanding on self & others
• Failure particularly difficult
• So goal oriented doesn’t see worth in playing the game
### Emotional Issues

#### Excessive Self Reliance
- Overly self reliant particularly when under stress
- Very sensitive to any signs of being too dependent so others do not know he/she needs help
- Presents to others what they expect more than what feels right
- People feel they don’t know him/her
- Slow to trust others with personal vulnerability
- May keep people emotionally distant

#### Emotionally Based Impulsivity
Propensity to act before what is needed is well thought out

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- Excessive Self Reliance: 55%
- Emotionally Based Impulsivity: 30%
- Excessive Self Reliance: 23%
- Emotionally Based Impulsivity: 6%
- Emotionally Based Impulsivity: 13%
JUDGMENT
Leopold Bellak, M.D.

- Collect All Relevant Available Data
- Boil Down To Essence
- Act
From Leopold Bellak, M.D.

Judgment

Collect All Relevant Available Data

Boil Down To Essence

Act

Positive Mental Attitude

Neutral Mental Attitude

Negative Mental Attitude

David M. Limardi
Measures of Judgment

Emotional Elements
- Shame
- Emotional energy
- Competitiveness
- Standards
- Need for nurturance
- Trust

Act
- Impulsive
- Procrastinate
- Changing Conceptual Sets
- Predict interpersonal environment
- Practical problem solving
- Verbal Abstractions

Collect All Relevant Available Data

Boil Down To Essence

Need for structure
- High
- Minimal
- Relationships
- Task

Tolerance of ambiguity
- Low
- High
Perceptions

- Be aware of the diffused power environment
- The criteria of success can be constantly changing
- Structure supports reality testing

Thinking

- Look for cues – emotions and non-verbal communications
- Be aware that you can leave some behind
- See the world through a different prism – search for different perspectives
- Work to locate the point of shared fate
Emotional Issues

- Know the power and challenges of technology
- Heed the shame alarm
- Monitor emotional energy
- If a Perfectionist, be wary of being moralistic and judgmental
- Shock and awe politics is meant to elicit an emotional response

Act

- Use the judgment triangle – resist the seduction of Ready – Fire – Aim and tactics in place of strategy
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- **Perceptions**:
  - CM: City Manager
  - > Ave.: Above Average
  - Ave.: Average
  - < Ave.: Below Average
  - Low: Low

- **Thinking**:
  - CM: CEOs & Executives
  - 56%: Manage Ambiguity
  - 45%: Individuals "Need No Structure"
  - 41%: Perceive Task
  - 39%: Practical Problem Solving
  - 38%: Abstraction
  - 36%: Predict Social Environment
  - 34%: Flexible Thinking
  - 33%: Shame Prone
  - 32%: Emotional Energy
  - 31%: Excessive Competes
  - 30%: Impulsive

- **Emotional Issues**:
  - 82%: Excessive
  - 67%: Perfectionist
  - 63%: Caring Needs
  - 60%: Excessive Self Reliance

**City Manager With Highly Successful CEOs & Executives**