



Transforming State Systems to  
Improve Outcomes for Children  
with Disabilities

# The Adaptive Leader's Toolkit

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# Leading by Convening: The Human Side of Change

- Developed with 50 national organizations over 16 years
- Completely stakeholder developed
- Tools to:
  - Building allies
  - Meet people (*and systems*) 'where they are'
  - Help them 'lead in place'
  - Change 'habits' of interaction

# Challenges


## Adaptive

- Influencers and connectors
- Principles
- Communication
- Understanding
- Agreement
- Willingness to make personal change

## Technical

- Experts
- Evidence based practices
- Checklists
- Manuals
- Tools
- Protocols

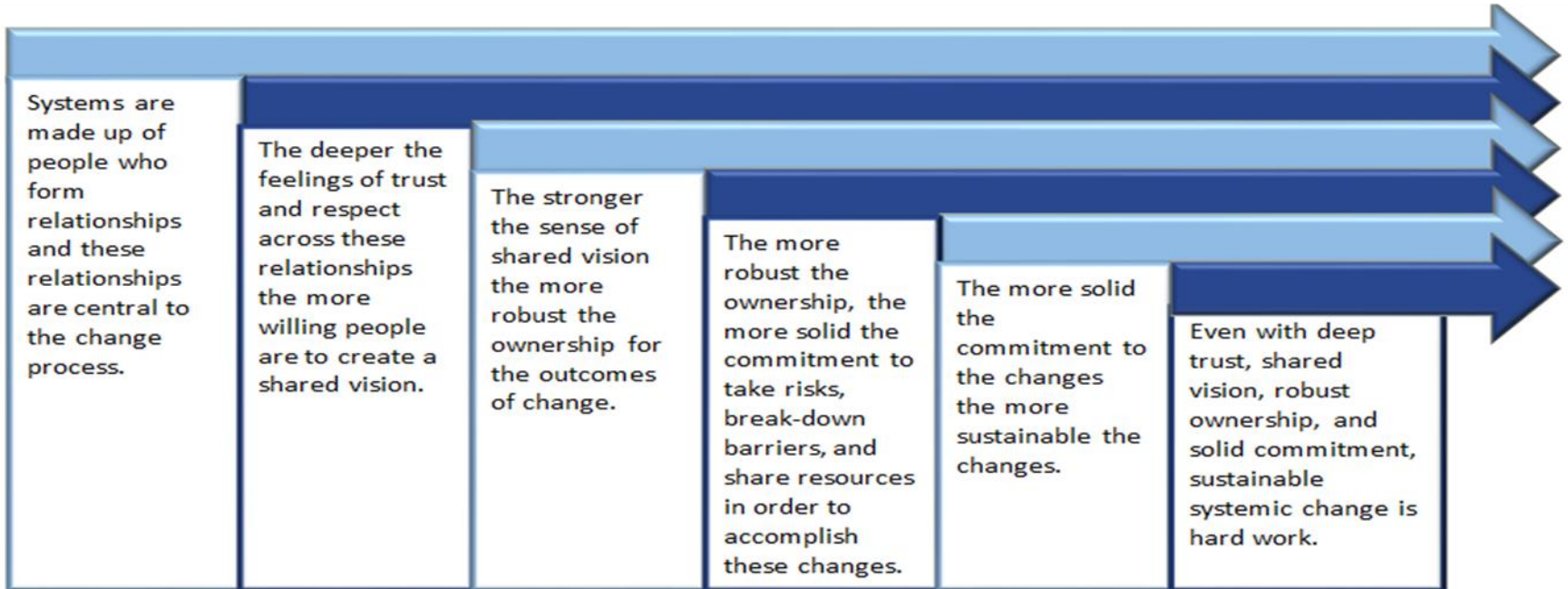
# The Leadership Challenge

- Knowing when a persistent problem needs an adaptive (relationship) solution
  - Learning that technical solutions are necessary but often not sufficient
  - Building adaptive skills as a part of strategy
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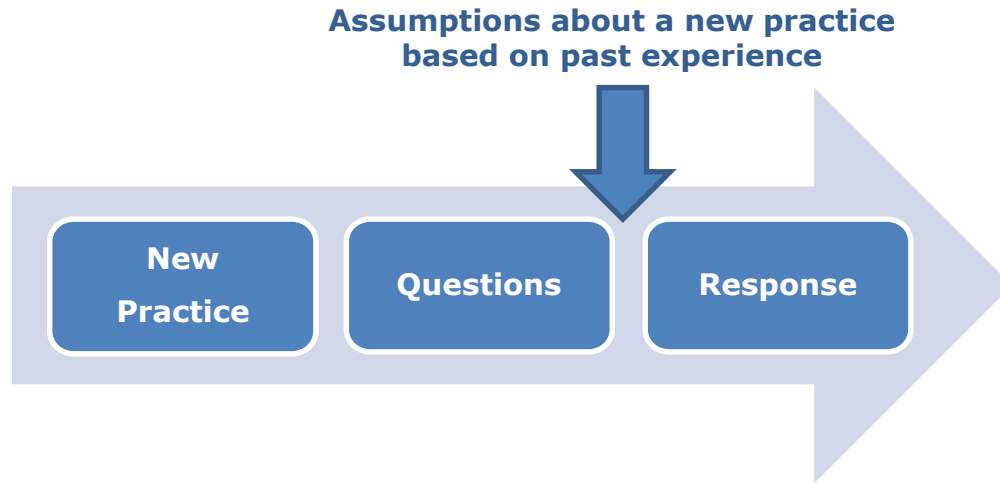
# Grounding Assumption about Leadership

- Leaders cannot really lead on an issue of importance if the stakeholders do not decide to support and make the change.
- Stakeholders cannot really get their needs met on an issue of importance if they do not work with those who have the authority to make change.
- Leaders and stakeholders need each to create sustainable change!

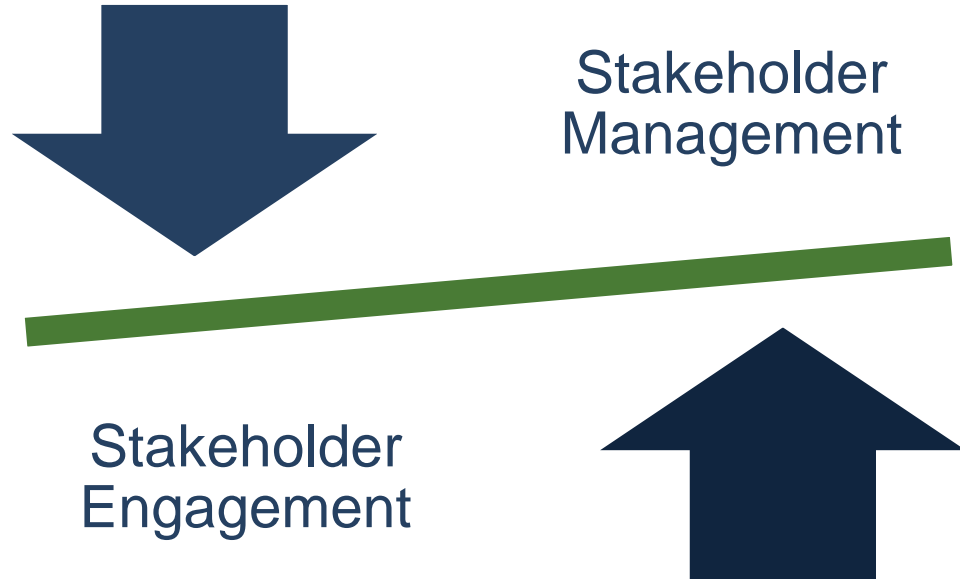
# Grounding Assumptions on Stakeholder Engagement



# What are your grounding assumptions?



# Making the Change: Reflecting on Practice



# Management and Engagement

## Are You Managing or Engaging Your Stakeholders?

Relationships are undervalued as a strategic investment.

Leading by Convener, 2004

### The Management/Engagement Continuum



This infographic was developed by a state and local agency staff and stakeholders working together as a follow up to the keynote session at CASPE/NCSSE 2010 Conference. It is a grassroots document for a set of excellent work that illustrates how management and engagement are intertwined.

Are You Managing or Engaging Your Stakeholders?

An infographic available at:  
[NCSI Resource Library](#)

508 accessible

# Four Simple Questions

Who cares about this issue and why?

What work is already underway?



**Leading by Convening**  
*Coalescing Around Issues*

**Four Simple Questions**

Persistent problems of implementation remain challenging because they require crossing many boundaries to ensure progress in practice. Issues are complex, interconnected and can look different from the perspective of various implementers.

What shared work could unite us?

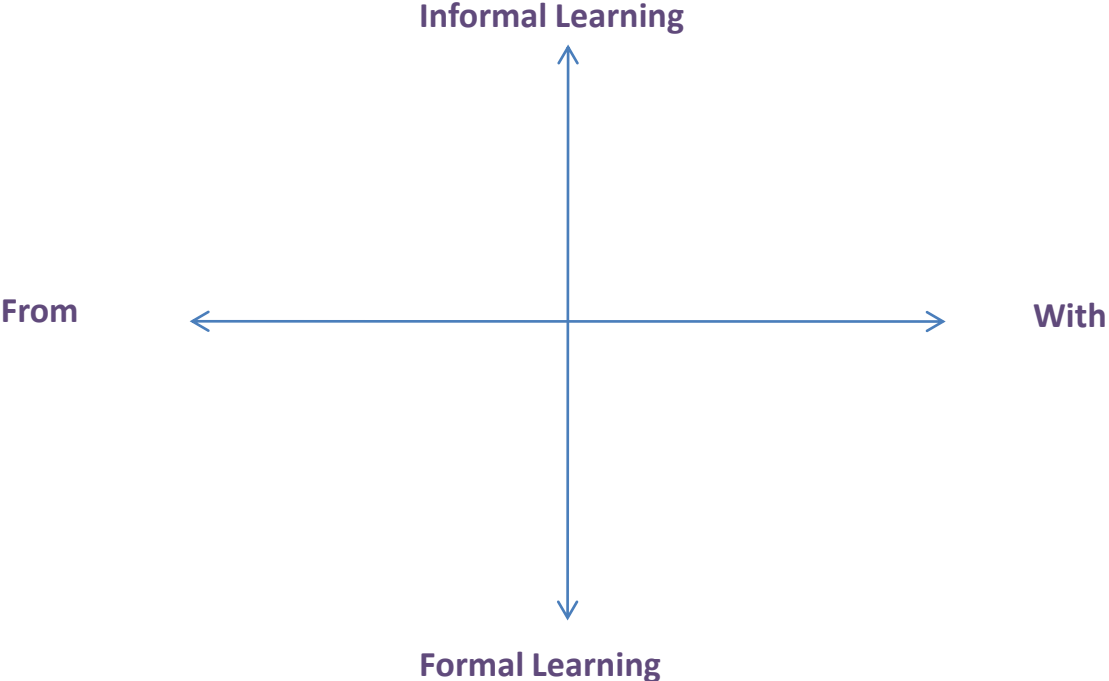
How can we deepen our connections?

# One Way and Two Way Learning

## One-Way and Two-Way Learning



# Plotting Learning Activities in Four Quadrants



# Relevant Participation Has Several Faces: *Range, Frequency, and Role*

## Range

- Power differential
- Supporters and critics
- Players at different levels of scale

## Frequency

- Episodic or ongoing
- Predictable interaction, sufficient to build relationships
- Often enough so that stakeholders can take roles

## Role

- Fixed or shared leadership roles
- Everybody comes as a learner

# Engaging Everybody



## Leading by Convening

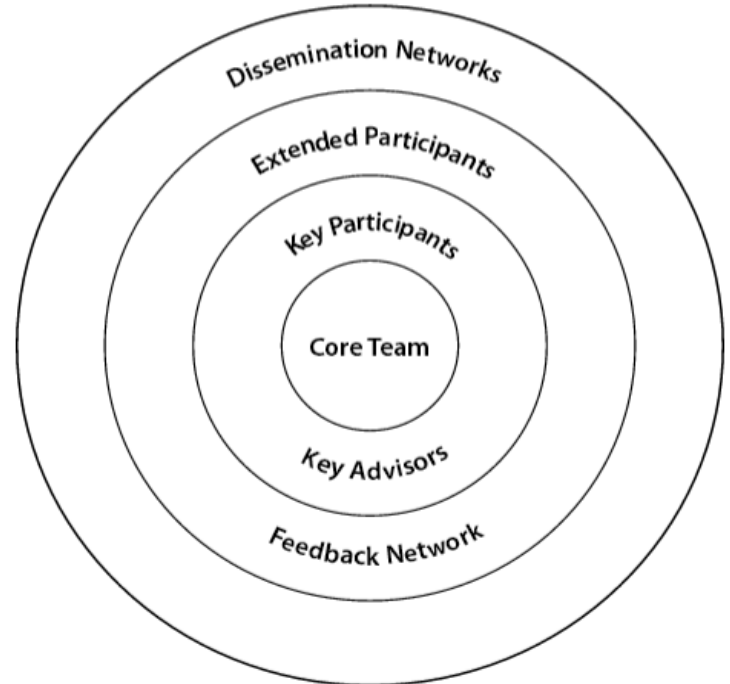
*Ensuring Relevant Participation*

### Engaging Everybody

Talk to a group about engaging the full range of stakeholders and predictably you hear, "We will have 200 people at every meeting." This is a real fear, but is it a real problem?

We have found that for most issues, people want to be involved but not necessarily physically present. After a meeting or two, people sort themselves out by the way they want to be engaged. We have built on that understanding in creating this tool. By intentionally asking at which level individuals want to be engaged early in your collaboration, you can be inclusive within a structure.

This tool can be used after the first few convenings or at the conclusion of the first convening, depending on the current relationship among participants. Use your best judgment to determine how many organizing sessions you need.



Operational Decisions	Informing Level	Networking Level	Collaborating Level	Transforming Level
Key actions and behaviors that require your attention	<b>Sharing/Disseminating:</b> <b>One-way communication</b>	<b>Exchanging:</b> <b>Two-way communication</b>	<b>Engaging:</b> <b>Working together on the issue over time</b>	<b>Committing to approach issues through engagement and consensus building</b>
Coalesce the stakeholders around the issue	Convener/lead agency identifies the issue and disseminates information in ways that encourage participation.	A forum is used to bring a core group of stakeholders together with the intent of gathering feedback to inform decisions on the issue.	The core group expands to include a wide array of stakeholders who unite and take joint action on the issue.	There is a unified and unwavering focus on the issue. Trust and respect are evident, even when there are differences of opinion. The group processes align toward a shared goal.
Ensure relevant participation	Convener/lead agency identifies stakeholder representatives, and informs them of opportunities to participate.	A core group of stakeholders works with the convener to identify/create an infrastructure for meaningful participation and shared learning.	The expanded group of stakeholders recognizes and values the work of others needed to achieve meaningful outcomes.	Broad stakeholder networks share ownership and influence in achieving the outcome.
Translate work into ways that others participate	Convener/lead agency asks stakeholder representatives to disseminate information on the issue	A core group of stakeholders uses the infrastructure to exchange information in understandable and mutually respectful ways.	The expanded group of stakeholders involves their networks in bridging knowledge and practice.	Broad stakeholder networks support their constituents throughout the practice change.
Communicate what is changing by actively doing work with the stakeholders	Convener/lead agency asks the stakeholder representatives to convey the benefit in making changes throughout their networks.	A core group of stakeholders use the infrastructure to exchange information about the changes that are occurring.	The expanded group of stakeholders shares the stories of changes achieved because the networks are more engaged in bridging knowledge and practice.	Broad stakeholder networks exchange stories of practice change and outcomes. They communicate the changes in ways the advance acceptance and the changes are enthusiastically embraced.
Demonstrate what is changing by actively doing the work	Stakeholder representatives invite others to participate in discussions on the changes being experienced.	A core group of stakeholders intentionally share stories, exchange information and suggest ideas for action.	The expanded group of stakeholders embraces shared leadership and participates in joint work across the networks.	Within broad stakeholder networks, excellent examples of practice change are routinely observable.

# Measuring Progress: Qualitative Rubrics to Quantitative Comparisons



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