Boundary Spanning
LEADERSHIP
Boundary Spanning Leadership

WHY
is boundary spanning leadership needed?

WHAT
is it?

HOW
can leaders span boundaries?

SO WHAT
are the implications for you?
Boundary Spanning Leadership

**WHY**
is boundary spanning leadership needed?

**WHAT**

**HOW**

**SO WHAT**
Solving challenges.....
requires working across boundaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 10 Organizational Issues</th>
<th>Impact on Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive for innovation</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint ventures, partnerships, alliances</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing diverse employment demographics</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging markets</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global talent shortage</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate social responsibility</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/collaborative networking</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mergers &amp; acquisitions</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geopolitics, terrorism, &amp; security</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate change</td>
<td>53%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Collaborating Effectively Across Boundaries

How effective are you?

79% - the critical gap

2009 Boundary Spanning study with 128 senior executives
CCL Research

Leadership Across Differences
Involved over 2800 surveys and nearly 300 interviews with leaders at all levels across 6 world regions.

Leadership at the Peak
Conducted with 128 senior executives.
Boundary Spanning Leadership

WHY

WHAT
is it?

HOW

SO WHAT
Agreement on overall goals, aims, and mission

Direction

Alignment

LEADERSHIP

Commitment

Effective organization and coordination of work

Willingness to subsume individual interests for the benefit of the collective
Boundary Spanning Leadership

A definition:

Boundary Spanning Leadership is the capability to create direction, alignment and commitment across boundaries in service of a higher vision or goal.*

Boundary-spanning leadership is simply Direction-Alignment-Commitment across groups
CCL research has found there are five common boundaries in organizations:

- **Vertical**
- **Horizontal**
- **Stakeholder**
- **Demographic**
- **Geographic**
Vertical Boundaries

Leading across levels, rank, seniority, authority, power

Common Terms:
Span of control, hierarchy chart, seniority, top-down/bottom-up, superior/subordinate, exempt/non-exempt, cascade through the ranks
Horizontal Boundaries

Leading across functions, units, peers, expertise

Common Terms:
division of labor, task differentiation, silos, stovepipes, turf battles, navigating the matrix, front office/back office, revenue center/cost center, legacy organizations, functions, units, peers
Stakeholder Boundaries

Leading at the interchange of an organization and its external partners, e.g., alliances, networks, value chains, vendors, customers, shareholders, advocacy groups, governments and communities

Common Terms:
constituents, networks, walled-off, iron curtain, closed doors, corporate-centric, not-our-business, insider/outsider, cross-sector, and corporate social responsibility
Demographic Boundaries

Leading between diverse groups, including the full range of human diversity from gender and race, to education and ideology.

Common Terms:
- heterogeneity
- multicultural
- mosaic
- glass ceilings
- generation gaps
- intolerance
- diversity-divides
- ideological battles
- personality differences
- culture clashes
Geographic Boundaries

Leading across distance, locations, cultures, regions, markets

Common Terms:
regions, markets, East/West, native/foreigner, global/local, HQ/field, mothership/satellite, language differences, virtual teams, and geographically dispersed teams
The Five Boundaries of Leadership

1. Which boundary are you best at spanning?

2. What behaviors make you good at this?

3. Which is the most pressing in your challenge?
What Practices will Help You Develop DAC Across Boundaries?

- Shared Goal or Mission
- Group X
- Direction Alignment Commitment
- Leader
- Group Y
Discovering New Frontiers is a process which must begin by Managing Boundaries in order to create safety.
Six Boundary Spanning Practices

- Manage Boundaries: Buffering
  - Creates Safety
  - Reflecting
    - Creates Respect

- Forge Common Ground: Connecting
  - Creates Trust
  - Mobilizing
    - Creates Community

- Discover New Frontiers: Weaving
  - Creates Interdependence
  - Transforming
    - Creates Re-Invention
Sample Tactics

Manage Boundaries

BUFFERING

Creates Safety

Creation of symbols, logos, mission statements that uniquely identify us

REFLECTING

Creates Respect

Visiting each others work spaces and meetings and appreciating how we are different - and emphasizing the differences rather than seeking commonalities
Sample Tactics

Forge Common Ground

Getting to know each other personally on an individual basis

CONNECTING

Creates Trust

Seeking inclusive “no-brainer” projects

MOBILIZING

Creates Community
Connecting

Turn to a neighbor – someone you may not know so well. Ask each other and respond to these questions:

- What brought you to your chosen field?
- What’s the thing you most enjoy about your work?
- What do you wish you were doing more of?
- What do you enjoy doing most when you aren’t working?
Sample Tactics

Discover New Frontiers

WEAVING

Creates Interdependence

TRANSFORMING

Creates Re-Invention

Joint “low hanging fruit” projects

Deliberately using diverse perspectives as a source of innovation
Six Boundary Spanning Practices

**Manage Boundaries**

- BUFFERING
  - Creates Safety

- REFLECTING
  - Creates Respect

**Forge Common Ground**

- CONNECTING
  - Creates Trust

- MOBILIZING
  - Creates Community

**Discover New Frontiers**

- WEAVING
  - Creates Interdependence

- TRANSFORMING
  - Creates Re-Invention

What tactics in your existing repertoire might you use?
Boundary Spanning Leadership

WHY

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are the implications for you?
BOUNDARIES

bound·a·ry
1. Something that indicates bounds or limits; a \textit{border} or bounding line
Boundary Spanning Leadership

FRONTIERS
bound-a-ry
2. Also called frontier. The location of the most advanced or newest activity in an area.
WHAT IS A TABLE CONVERSATION?

• a simple methodology

• a powerful metaphor
ASSUMPTIONS...

• People already have within them the wisdom and creativity to deal with current challenges.

• Exploring issues together encourages new ways of thinking and a shift in perspective creates new possibilities.
The knowledge and wisdom we need is already present and accessible.

Intelligence emerges as the system connects to itself in creative ways.

Collective insight evolves from...

- Noticing new possibilities
- Connecting ideas
- Listening for understanding
- Honoring unique contributions

ASSUMPTIONS
Outcomes are better when they are informed by:

- Diversity of Perspectives
- Cross Pollination of Ideas
- Attention to bigger Themes & Patterns
- Questions that Matter to People
PURPOSE OF THE TABLE CONVERSATIONS

• Generate input, share knowledge, stimulate innovative thinking, explore action possibilities
• Create a dense web of connections in a short period of time as threads of conversation reveal new patterns
• Another tool for your toolkit
DESIGN PRINCIPLES

• Set the context
• Create hospitable space
• Explore questions that matter
• Encourage everyone’s contribution
• Cross-pollinate & connect diverse perspectives
• Listen together for patterns, insights, and deeper questions
• Harvest and share collective discoveries
INSTRUCTIONS

• Multiple tables
• Several “rounds”
• 15-25 minutes each
• Each round, a host stays, others move to new tables, carrying new ideas and questions to the next conversation.
• The role of the host is to welcome newcomers, quickly share highlights of the prior conversation and invite people to share
• After the second or third round, we harvest the learning together.
THE JOB OF THE HOST

• Welcome & invite people to their seats
• Quickly Introduce table
• Pose the first question (I will post it)
• Encourage every one to “lean in” and participate
• At the end of each round, host to stay while everyone else travels
• Summarize and Harvest the learning
• What themes and patterns appear
TABLE ETIQUETTE

• Focus on what matters, and has universal application
• Contribute. Be present
• Speak your mind and heart
• Listen to for understanding
• Link and connect ideas
• Listen together for insights and deeper questions
• Have some fun
QUESTION 1

What Collaboration Stories can you share that are roaring successes?
What supports and/or gets in the way of you and others doing great work?
QUESTION 3

What are the tensions, dilemmas, challenges you face as you work more collaboratively?
What are the core values and leadership practices that help build a stronger culture of collaboration?
HARVESTING

Purpose: To identify patterns, collective knowledge and new possibilities

Sample Questions:
• As you listened to the conversations,
  • What stands out to you as most important, what most energizes you?
  • What are the dilemmas/ opportunities you face?
  • What is the next level of thinking or action you will take?
  • What would it take to create change?
What has been your major learning or insight?

How might you act on this new understanding?
HARVESTING THE LEARNING

What ideas came up across tables & conversations? What new ideas & possibilities were emerging?
What aha’s, surprises emerged at your tables?
How might **you** act on this new understanding?
WHAT’S NEXT?

• What action are you called to take?
• Commitment statement? Today I learned....today I learned that I...
• What is one thing you would do to move closer to collaboration and spanning boundaries?
• Turn to your neighbor...share one insight.