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The Foundations of Systems Leadership

Welcome

What's up duck?

On a scale of 1-9, which giant inflatable duck best represents how you feel this morning?

Write your answer in the chat!

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Our learning journey

A: The foundations of systems leadership

1. Thinking in systems
2. **Your role in leading change**
3. Understanding your system

B: Becoming a system activist

4. Skills and behaviours for systems leadership

   Skills sessions:
   - Relationship building; developing empathy
   - Understanding biases; valuing difference
   - Storytelling; change conversations; influencing
   - Negotiation

C: Building collaborative capacity and taking collaborative action

5. Building collaborative capacity
6. Partnering across difference
7. Changing systems through collaborative action

D: Learning as a driver of systems change

8. Developing good learning habits and culture; measurement and impact

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Our Journey So Far...

Last Time...

Systems produce their own patterns of behaviour and outcomes

Systems change is about shifting the conditions that maintain those outcomes

Complex systems generate adaptive challenges

Adaptive challenges require learning and cannot be solved by executive authority alone

System leadership is the activity of mobilising change across a system

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Personal Reflection

```
        Observe
Intervene      Interpret
```
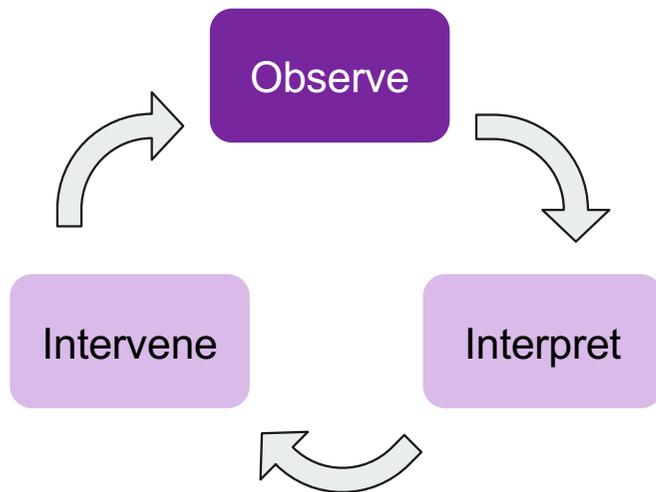
Take a moment to recall the **technical and adaptive challenges you noticed in your life and work, and the kind of responses they are generating.**

Share some examples in the chat!

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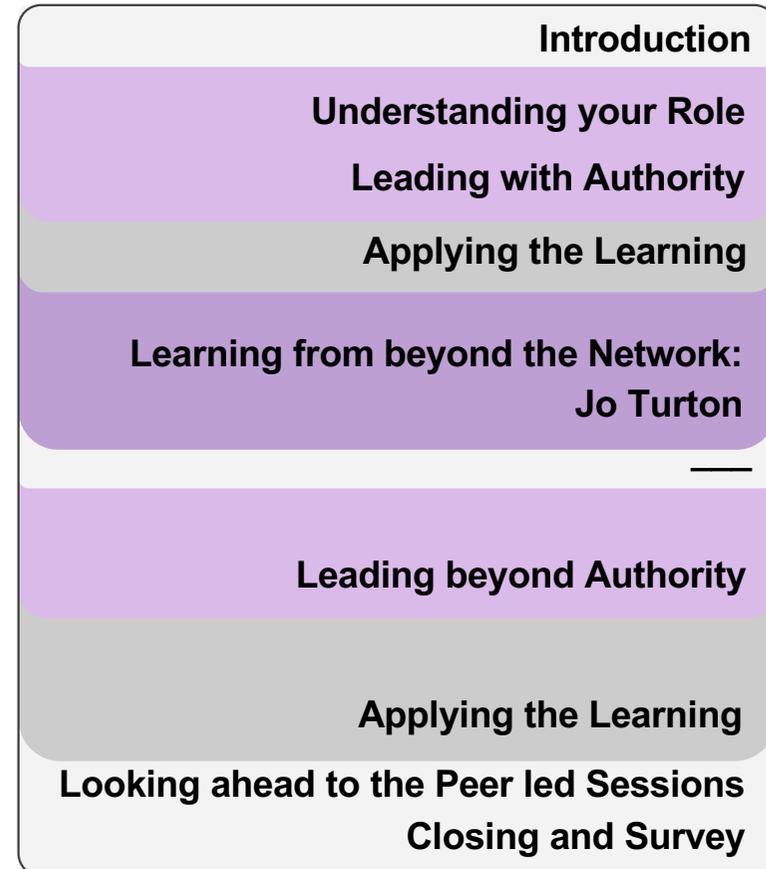
Your Role in Leading Change

Key learning

- How is 'who you are' distinct from 'the role you play'?

- How does your role affect how you act?

- How does your role give you authority to exercise leadership?

- How can you exercise leadership beyond your authority?

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Today

A: The foundations of systems leadership

1. Thinking in systems

2. **Your role in leading change**
   Follow up peer led session

1. Understanding your system
   Follow up peer led session

Introduction

Understanding your Role

Leading with Authority

Applying the Learning

Learning from beyond the Network:
Jo Turton

Leading beyond Authority

Applying the Learning

Looking ahead to the Peer led Sessions

Closing and Survey

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Understanding Your Role

What is a Role?

In life we play many different roles

Aunt

Baker

Colleague

White person

Teacher

Employee

Child

Manager

Friend

Economist

British

Problem Solver

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What is a Role?

Role ≠ Self

- Your roles are important because they can provide guidance and motivation, a set of values shaped by your experiences that you can draw from.

- Your roles also shape the way that others see you, what they expect from you, and how they act around you. This may not be something you can change, or even be aware of.

- Distinguishing between the roles you play, and your self, can help to depersonalise issues and give you greater resilience and freedom to pursue change.

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Systems leadership

Mobilising change across a system

Systems leadership is an activity

It's about mobilising people to tackle adaptive challenges

Systems leadership takes you beyond your authority

It requires you to see the whole system, including your role in it

Systems leadership is a team sport

It requires collaboration and interdependence with others in the system

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Leading with Authority

Leadership and Authority

Leadership is an activity - It can be undertaken with or without authority

"Authority is power conferred to perform a service" - Ronald Heifetz

Formal authority - role, title, resources you control

Informal authority - connections, trust, reputation

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Expectations of Authority

Authority is expected to provide services to continue to be have power conveyed...

Direction: Clarity of purpose; problem definition and solution.

Protection: Protect against external threats to the system.

Order: Maintain rules and norms, limit conflicts, assign roles and tasks

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Leading with Authority

...Those services can be used to mobilise change.

Direction: Identify and diagnose the challenge. Separate the technical and adaptive components. Keep focussed on the work.

Protection: Protect experimentation from pressure to conform. Build relationships and collaborations across the system.

Order: Create space for debate. Remove obstacles for emerging practices and processes.

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Applying the learning

Types of Authority Quiz

What types of Authority do these people have? Formal or Informal?

- Boris Johnson

- Greta Thunberg

- Marcus Rashford

- You

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Learning from beyond the Network

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Guest Speaker - Jo Turton

- Chief Fire Officer and Chief Executive for Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

- Formerly:

  - Chief Executive of Lancashire County Council

  - Executive Director for the Environment, Lancashire County Council

  - Assistant Chief Executive of Shropshire County Council

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Break - back at 10:30

Reflections

Leading beyond Authority

Understanding your authorisation

"Give me a place to stand, and I will move the world"

Archimedes

Technical and adaptive challenges

Type of Work	Problem	Solution	Response	Locus of Work
Technical	Clearly defined	Clear and known. Requires application of procedures and expertise	Rational, logical and thorough	Led by authority
Adaptive	Not clear, requires discovery	Unknown. Requires learning	Evokes an emotional response, issues are avoided	Requires engagement of stakeholders

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Systems leadership takes you beyond your authority

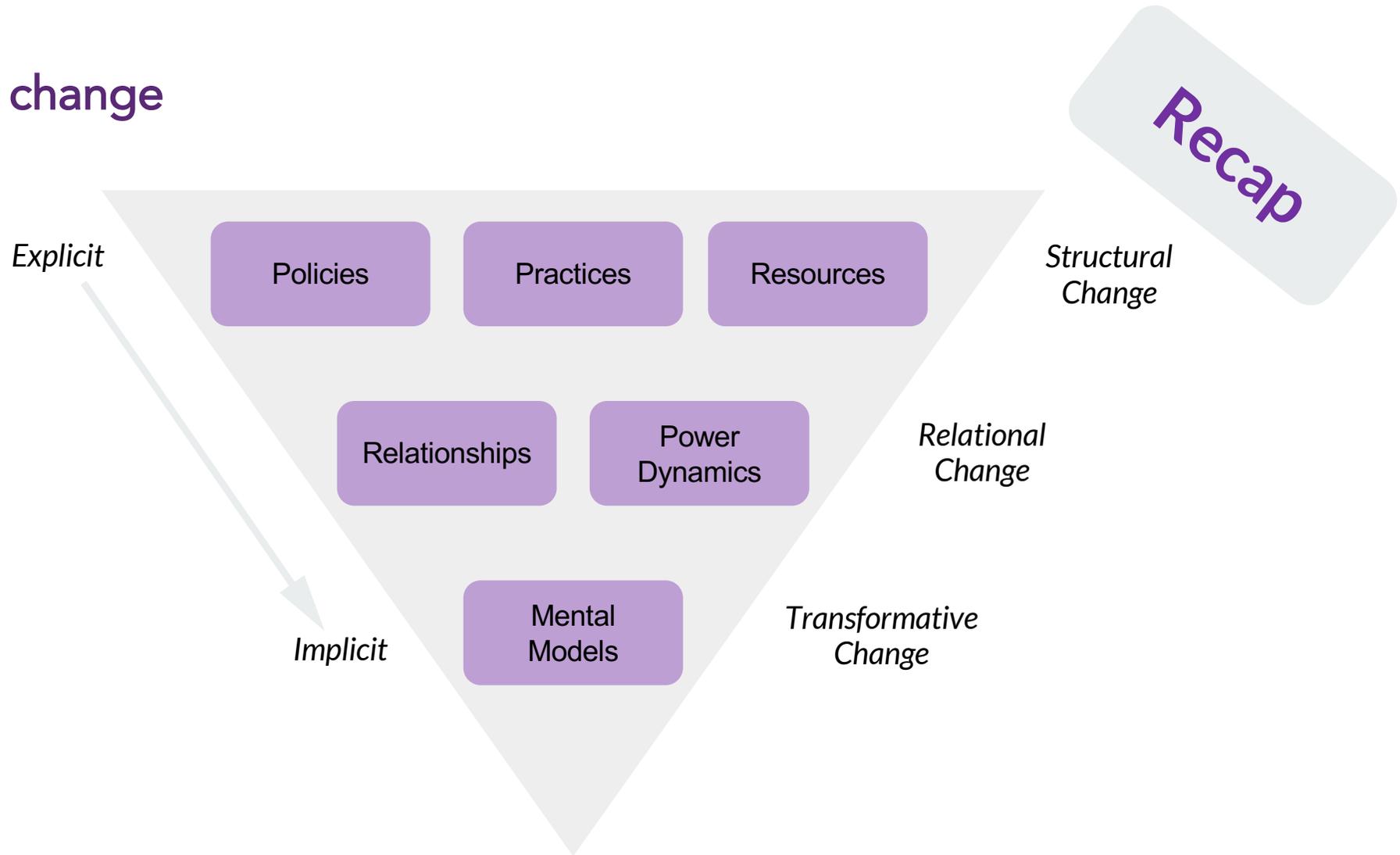**Practically** - authority within a system is dispersed

- Actors might have more or less authority, but no one is in control

Conceptually

- The nature of adaptive challenges: learning required; problem embedded in the context/system
- Expectations: direction; protection; order

Empirically - so many examples to inspire

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Systems change

Explicit

| Policies | Practices | Resources |

Structural Change

| Relationships | Power Dynamics |

Relational Change

Implicit

| Mental Models |

Transformative Change

FSG, The Water of Systems Change

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Systems leadership takes you beyond your authority

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Empirically - so many examples to inspire

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Systems leadership beyond your authority: advantages

- **Latitude**: to do the unexpected and create pressure by doing so

- **Focus:** fewer stakeholder expectations to meet

- **Proximity:** information advantage from being closer to the action

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Both/and, not either/or

Act with others, and create space for others to act

'Partnering' with authority

- Working together towards a shared purpose
- Creating space for, or pressure on, those with authority to act

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Applying the learning

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Group Work

How does it change the way you think about exercising leadership across the system when you think through the lens of:

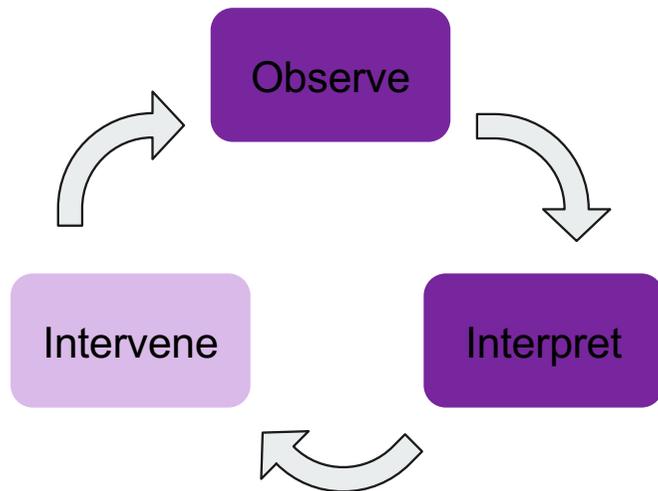- your formal authority
- your informal authority
- both together?

Back at 11:15

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Group Work Share Back

Personal Reflection

Personal Reflection

Leadership in complex systems requires constant learning.

Observe → Interpret → Intervene → (cycle back to Observe)

Reflection Activity

Observe: Notice when someone says something about you, positive or negative.

Interpret: Consider what that reveals about the role they might think you are playing ?

- Is it the role you expected to be playing?
- How do you think you came to have that role?
- What authority does it give you?

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Closing

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Key learning

- Your role is one of many identities, distinct from your self

- Your role shapes your actions and the actions of others

- Authority can help you exercise leadership, but also make it harder

- Acting beyond your authority can give you greater freedom

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Next Steps

A: The foundations of systems leadership

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2. Your role in leading change
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Peer Led Session

Peer Led Session

The more you put in, the more you will get out

Come prepared to share, to listen and to respect the confidences of others

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Peer Led Session

What:

I understand: I can talk about what I've learned

I see the relevance: I get how what I've learned is valuable to me

I can act: I am beginning to apply what I've learned

How:

Discussion with peers: freedom to say, 'I don't understand'

Space for reflection: using ourselves as data

Using the system in the room to experiment

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