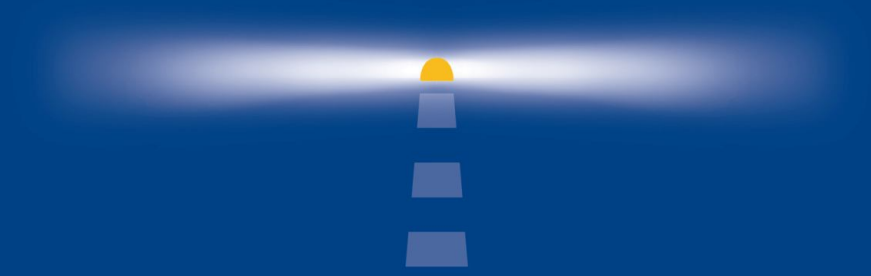


Leadership Centre for local government

5 Rules of Partnerships

1 Not everything is better done through partnerships

- No great poet paired up (eg Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth all worked alone)
- But composers often do pair with lyricists
- Be clear WHY you are in the partnership

2 Partnerships are about shared:

- Risk
- Expertise
- Reward
- Be clear WHO is bringing what to the table

3 Partnerships must have a clear purpose

- An external goal
- Be clear WHICH objectives you have agreed to deliver

4 Partnerships are like gardening

- They need tender loving care
- But if there are weeds, they need removing
- Be clear about WHEN achievables are expected

5 Successful partnerships deliver something <u>different</u>

- More cost effective use of resources
- Faster roll out of programmes
- New ways of working
- Be clear about WHAT the purpose is

Partnerships

Moving beyond the temporary suspending of mutual loathing in search of cash

Two scenarios post 2010

- Labour Win
- Conservative Win

Labour Win

- Public sector expenditure falls off the cliff from 1st April 2011

Conservative Win

- Public expenditure falls off a precipice
- Encounters gale force 8 blowing you backwards against the rocks
- Implementation from emergency budget June 2010

In either case

- Your job is to ensure safe landing at the bottom of the cliff or precipice
- No practice jumps
- PS as part of a previous efficiency round we discover there are no parachutes

Historically partnerships have been

- Based around short term and limited access to funds
- Rarely about more systemic connecting of services and budgets
- Often time limited in practice (if not in original intent)
- Heavily dependent on particulr individuals

But now

- Not only no new cash but lots less
- Salami slicing or fringe shavings wont do
- Its for the long term (2032 to be back to stable state- if you are an optimist!)
- Lets assume a minimum saving of between 10-20% across the board and then a cash freeze even though more demand (and that’s optimistic)

So we need

- To think differently
- And act differently

And we have no technical solutions

- The agenda is increasingly one of wicked problems
- Child safety
- Health service not just an illness service
- Community cohesion
- Aspiration

Three different mindsets

- Money
- Culture
- Power

Money

- A proxy for resources and for resource allocation
- Government has just released partial analysis of public sector spend for every local authority area
- Total Place initiative will do this in depth for 13 areas (building on Counting Cumbria pilot)

Purpose

- If we knew what the total resource allocation was across our area could we find better ways of maximising the public value of the spend?

- An “efficiency” agenda

Culture

- Building on the knowledge of what we each do
- Can we co design better ways of doing things?
- How do we build on the best bits of each services traditions and practices?

Purpose

- To allow us to focus more on the customer/citizen
- To have services with line of sight of that

- An “improvement” agenda

Power

- To whom are we accountable
- And for what
- Both within our local silo
- And in our relationship with Whitehall
- NB What gets counted is what gets valued

Purpose

- Have we the right levels of command and control?
- What are the implications of things being be mandatory?

- An “accountability” agenda

Understanding the mix

- Money/resources
- Culture
- Power
- Management
- Leadership
- Command

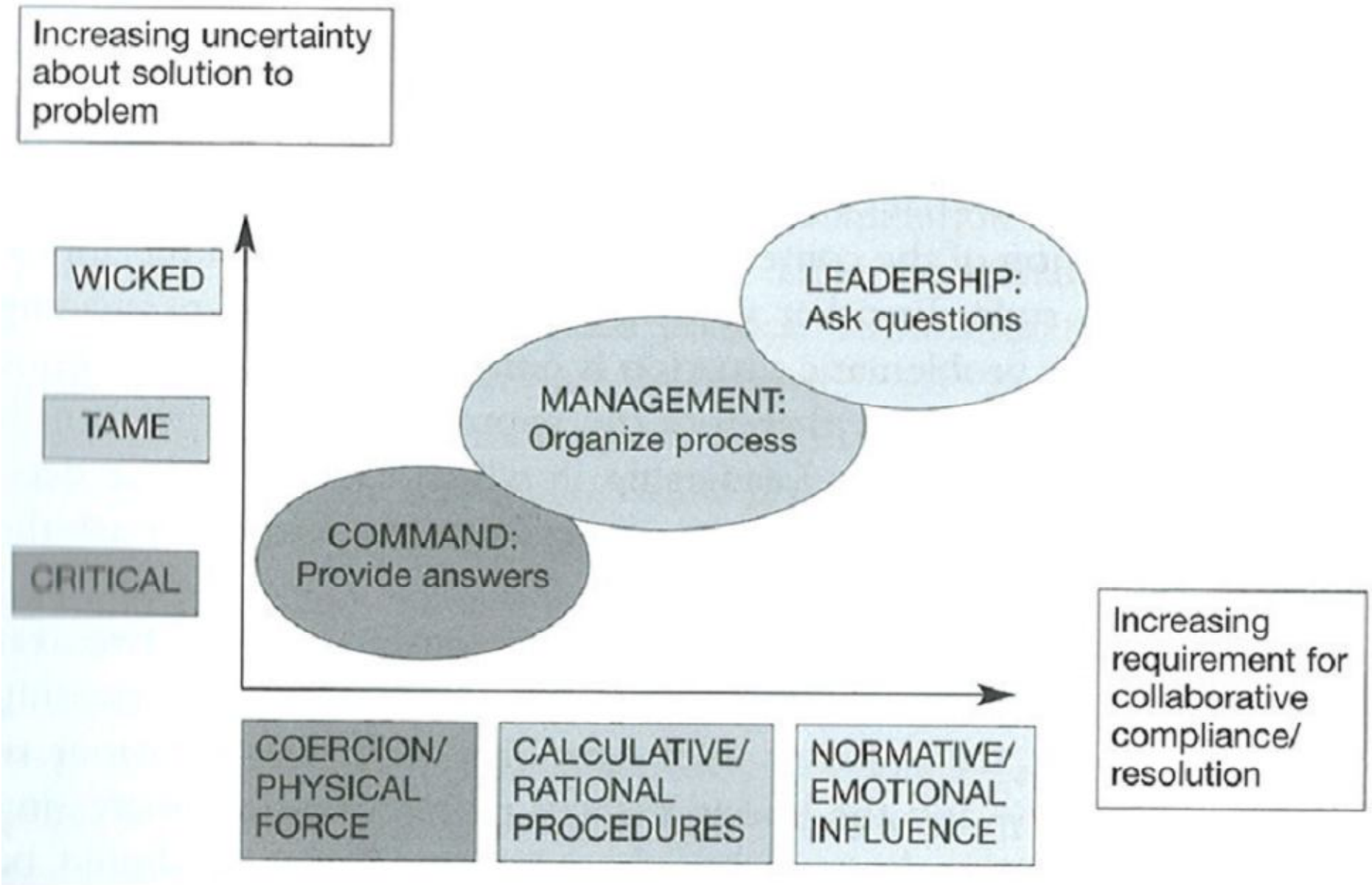


Image from: Keith Grint – Leadership, Management and Command: Rethinking D-Day

Some implications

- Clarity of strategic and delivery roles
- Elected member

Strategic and Operational

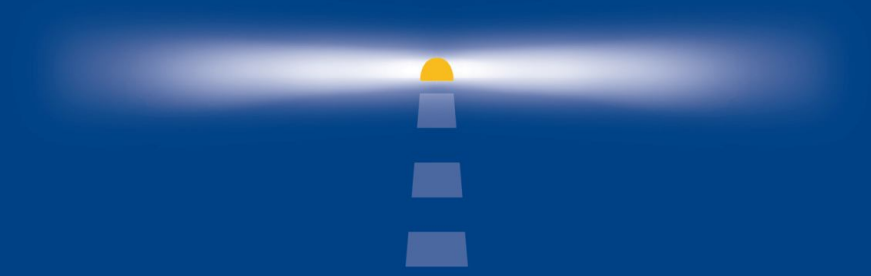
- Who asks the questions
- Who delivers the answers

Elected members

- Champions of people and place not second guessing operational delivery
- Story tellers
- Create the cohesion and impetus for change
- What is their role in the partnership?

From fear to trust

- Teams can only work based on mutual trust not mutual fear
- Teams only also work where we can recognise the value of the distinctive contribution of other team members
- Practice makes perfect so Team Place X needs to flow through lots of activities not just occasional outings



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