

Handouts for the Webinar

Leadership in Income Maintenance: Solving and Aligning Technical and Adaptive Problems

June 19, 2014

Presenters

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Produced by

Family and Children’s Resource Program, part of the
Jordan Institute for Families
UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work

in collaboration with the

North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services

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Highly Recommended Reading

Heifetz, R. A. & Laurie, D. L. (1997, January-February). The work of leadership. *Harvard Business Review*, 124-134.
http://admin.kasa.org/Professional_Development/documents/TheWorkofLeadership.pdf

Principles of Partnership

Everyone deserves
respect.



JUDGMENTS
CAN WAIT.



Partnership...



is a process.

Everyone
has strengths.



Everyone
needs to be
heard.



Partners share
power.




SIX PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP

Developed by Appalachian Family Innovations at Appalachian State University

1. **Everyone desires respect.** This principle is based on the idea that all people have worth. It recognizes everyone's right to self-determination, to make their own decisions about their lives. Acceptance of this principle leads one to treat clients with respect and to honor their opinions and world view. True partnership is impossible without mutual respect.
2. **Everyone needs to be heard.** This principle is based on Stephen Covey's "seek first to understand" and is accomplished primarily through empathic listening. While empathic listening looks very much like active or reflective listening, what differentiates it is the listener's motivation. Active and reflective listening techniques are often used to manage or manipulate someone's behavior so that the listener can advance his own agenda. Empathic listening is motivated by the listener's desire to truly understand someone's point of view—to enter someone's frame of reference—without a personal agenda. When one feels heard and understood, defensiveness and resistance are unnecessary, and solutions can be sought.
3. **Everyone has strengths.** This principle recognizes that all people have many resources, past successes, abilities, talents, dreams, etc. that provide the raw material for solutions future success. As "helpers" we become involved with people because of their problems; these problems then become a filter that obscures our ability to see strengths. Acceptance of this principle doesn't mean that one ignores or minimizes problems; it means that one works hard to identify strengths as well as problems so that the helper and the client have a more balanced, accurate, and hopeful picture.
4. **Judgments can wait.** This principle recognizes that once a judgment is made, one's tendency is to stop gathering new information or to interpret in light of the prior judgment. Therefore, since a helper's judgments can have an immense impact on a client's life, it is only fair to delay judgment as long as possible, then to hold it lightly, while remaining open to new information and being willing to change one's mind. Acceptance of this principle does not mean that decisions cannot be made quickly; it simply requires that ultimate judgments be very well considered.
5. **Partners share power.** This principle is based on the premise that power differentials create obstacles to partnership. Since society confers power upon the helper, it is the helper's responsibility to create a partnership with a client, especially those who appear hostile, resistant, etc. Clients do not owe us their cooperation: we must earn it.
6. **Partnership is a process.** This principle recognizes that each of the six principles is part of a greater whole. While each has merit on its own, all are necessary for partnership. Each principle supports and strengthens the others. In addition, this principle acknowledges that putting the principles into practice consistently is hard. Acceptance of the principles is not enough; it requires intention and attention to practice the principles.

Source: Appalachian Family Innovations. (2003). *Partners in change: A new perspective on child protective services (curriculum)*. Morganton, NC: Author.




Leadership in Income Maintenance

Solving and Aligning Technical and Adaptive Problems

Jordan Institute for Families, UNC-CH School of Social Work

Please click on the colored link below to download the handout for today:
[6-19-14 webinar handout](#)



June 19, 2014

[1]

Goals of this Webinar




- Describe difference between adaptive and technical problems
- Explore the kind of leadership needed to deal with adaptive challenges

Ultimate Goal
Help you navigate changes to supervision in Income Maintenance.

[2]

Today's Agenda



- I. Orientation & Introductions
- II. Heart of Leadership
- III. Technical Problems
- IV. Adaptive Challenges

[3]

About this Webinar

Partnership between:




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Panelists

Catherine Williamson-Hardy
Assistant Director
Durham County Social Services

Christine Howell
Clinical Assistant Professor
Jordan Institute for Families
UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work




Tech Support

Phillip Armfield
John McMahon

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Income Maintenance Supervision in NC Today


- Work of Income Maintenance has changed
- Traditional leadership structures have changed
- Customer service is a critical element
- Managing stress is imperative for the supervisor and for workers



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The Heart of Leadership

Leadership at its heart is about mobilizing people to tackle tough problems.



Leadership involves our self-images and moral codes.

—Ronald Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (1998)

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PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP

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Principles of Partnership

1



Everyone deserves respect.

[10]

Principles of Partnership

2



Everyone needs to be heard.

[11]

Principles of Partnership

3



Everyone has strengths.

[12]

Principles of Partnership

4



JUDGMENTS
CAN WAIT.

[13]

Principles of Partnership

5



Partners share
power.

[14]

Principles of Partnership

6



Partnership...
is a process.


[15]

ADAPTIVE AND TECHNICAL WORK

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Technical Work

- Perspectives are aligned
- Definition of the problem is clear
- Solution and implementation of the problem is clear
- Primary locus of responsibility for organizing the work is the leader



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Leadership Failure


Single most common reason for leadership failure is when people in positions of authority treat **adaptive changes** like **technical problems**.



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What is Adaptive Change?

- Legitimate, yet competing, perspectives emerge
- Definition of the problem is unclear
- Solution and implementation is unclear and requires learning
- Primary locus of responsibility is not the leader



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Difference Between Adaptive and Technical Work

Technical	Adaptive
Alignment	Different perspectives
Clear definition	Unclear definition
Solution and implementation clear	Unclear solution and implementation
Leader can take primary responsibility	Leader cannot be primarily responsible

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Adaptive and Technical Change Matrix

	What's the Work?	Who does the Work?
Technical Problem	Apply current know-how	The "Experts"
Technical and Adaptive	Learn new ways	The experts and stakeholders
Adaptive Change	Learn new ways	Stakeholders

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Practice with Technical and Adaptive Change

Implementation of . . .



[22]

Use Your Chat Pod

1 What are some **technical challenges** you've encountered with NC FAST?

2 What are some **adaptive challenges** you've faced with NC Fast?

[23]

What's required for a leader to lead BOTH technical and adaptive changes?



[24]


Adaptive Leaders

- Assessing
- Managing
- Distributing
- Providing contexts
- Build relationships
- Self-awareness
- Keeping what's essential and building from it

"As in nature, a successful adaptation enables an organization or community to take the best from its traditions, identity, and history into the future."
—Ronald Heifetz
The Practice of Adaptive Leadership

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Q & A



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Transfer of Learning

Use your chat pod:

Describe one way this information will help you with your work?

{ 27 }

Highly Recommended

Heifetz, R. A. & Laurie, D. L. (1997, January-February). The work of leadership. *Harvard Business Review*, 124-134.

A link to this article can be found on page 1 of your handouts

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To take the survey now, just click on the link below:



[Webinar survey](#)

Don't forget - You have only one week to complete

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Follow-up Document from the Webinar

Leadership in Income Maintenance: Solving and Aligning Technical and Adaptive Problems

Webinar delivered June 19, 2014
Follow-up document date: June 25, 2014

Presenters

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Webinar handouts: <http://fcrp.unc.edu/pdfs/IncomeMaintenance.pdf>

Recording: if you missed the webinar or want to view it again, go to: <http://fcrp.unc.edu/webinars.asp>

About this Webinar

How did this webinar come about?

This was the first of two free, 90-minute webinars for county DSS **income maintenance (IM) supervisors** that the UNC-CH School of Social Work will offer in June. Both webinars center on the theme "Managing Change in Times of Transition: The Work of the Leader."

These two webinars have come about as a result of meetings between the Jordan Institute for Families at the UNC-CH School of Social Work and the NC Association of County Directors of Social Services (NCACDSS). During these meetings, county DSS directors identified the need for income maintenance supervisors to have some training that would help them cope with the sea changes that they and their staffs are experiencing. They suggested that because IM supervisors are too busy to attend long classroom or online trainings, 90-minute webinars might be the best approach.

After this meeting UNC consulted with the NCACDSS and developed the two webinars. A representative of the NCACDSS identified a group of county IM supervisors; UNC surveyed them to

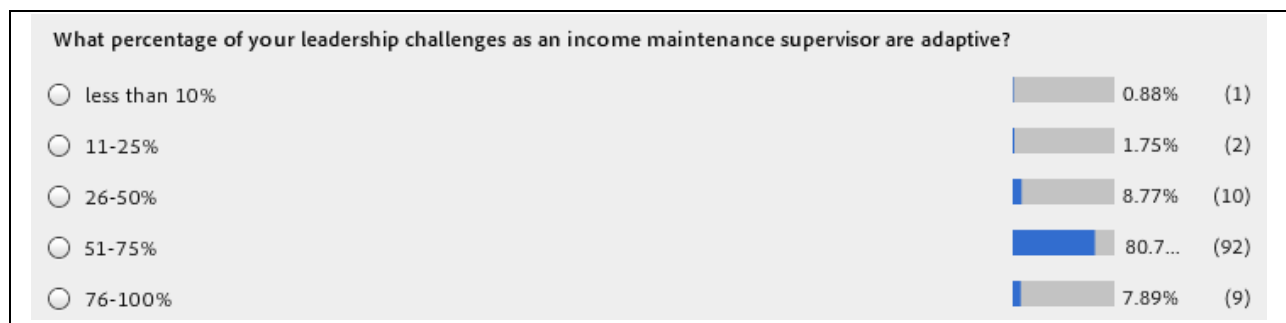
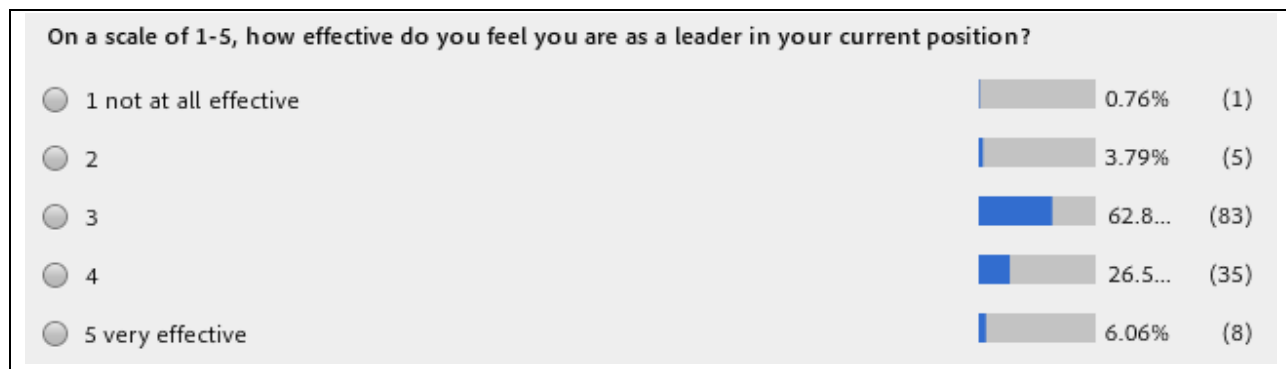
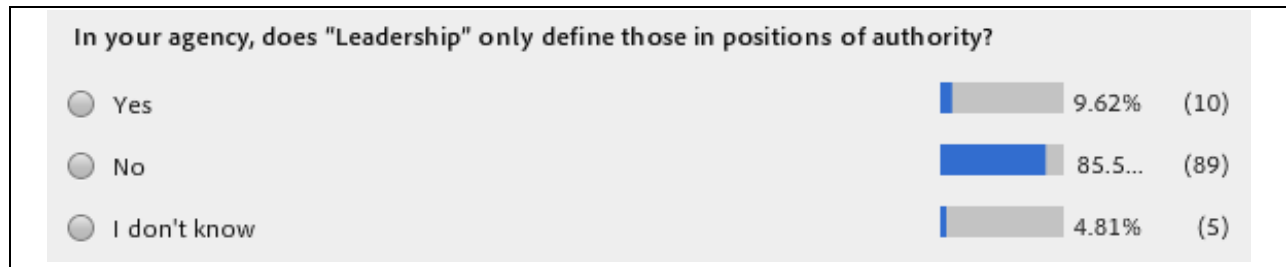
identify the content that they would see as most helpful to themselves and others. The topics selected for these webinars were the ones identified most often by those supervisors.

It is hoped that if these events are successful, other webinars for this audience might be offered in the future.

Who attended this event?

A total of 407 individuals from 91 North Carolina county DSS agencies registered for this event. Most (76%) were income maintenance supervisors; additional registrants included program managers, program administrators, lead workers, and 11 county DSS directors.

Participant Responses to Polling Questions



Technical Challenges Experienced by Participants

What are some technical challenges you've encountered with NC Fast?

Participant responses to this question included the following:

- [In]adequate or lack of reports.
- How to implement training amongst programs without a dedicated training staff
- How to complete Medicaid re-certifications in NCFAST
- Cases that won't authorize
- The constant technical challenges that emerge and changing solutions make it very difficult for staff and supervisors to keep up with the most current info.
- Lack of manuals
- 5 workers to do all of the case maintenance end for both family and children's and FNS - moving people around to be able to get the work completed. Determining the strengths of each worker.
- One of the most technical challenges is making sure all staff are applying current NC Fast changes.
- The level of computer skills that staff had - moving from a paper-based system with data entry type authorization systems to an entirely web-based system - "merging" policy with the system - not being able to get answers to apply the changing program policy when we needed clarification or interpretation of that policy, reconciling the integrated manual when areas weren't addressed that were in the "old" policy - was it left out intentionally (change) or not
- Issues with reports, communication across systems (NC Tracks and NC Fast), trying to learn updates quickly and share information quickly
- Constant upgrades to NCFAST, location /names of resources
- loss of productivity
- Keeping up with all changes within NC FAST, including training
- Reports having issues and not enough information provided
- Inaccurate reports, down time
- Too many work-arounds—changes from day to day
- Faster solutions to help desk tickets
- Increasing overdues and challenges with getting policy questions answered fully from state reps.
- Large challenge is that NC FAST and the policy manuals are not married - terminology of one doesn't match the other.
- Trying to find answers from NC Fast and state reps when NC Fast does not read policy correctly- resulting in overdues and issues with clients
- Not having access to policy that corresponds with NCFAST actions
- Failure of universal worker concept
- Ditto the universal worker concept.
- Challenges of meeting deadlines of processing apps and reviews
- NC FAST is not user friendly.
- Leadership now feels like being a symphony conductor

- The rush to push programs into NC Fast created lots of technical problems with the system.
- More clear/accurate error messages in NC Fast
- Lack of TIMELY communication from state on issues within NC Fast
- Universal Worker, NCFast Job Aids, policy not merged - information all over map - various portals need one main source (i.e., Manuals)
- Having to handle a case over and over thinking the case is active when it is not active, NCFast very time consuming, not user friendly as EIS/FSIS

Adaptive Challenges Experienced by Participants

What are some adaptive challenges you've faced with NC Fast?

Participant responses to this question included the following:

- One of the most challenging Adaptive Challenges is lack of control; whereas we knew what was needed previously.
- How to organize and rearrange staff/changing our culture to meet the volume
- Managing the stress levels of NC Fast staff, it has gone on and on and on
- How to manage the volume of work without being able to hire new employees
- How to organize staff and how to train staff.
- staff recognizing that leadership doesn't have the answers (they are used to us being the experts) - leaders feeling overwhelmed because don't have answers to support staff - staff/leaders being able to function & adapt to planning to move forward in one direction then new information and having to change directions, rapidly & frequently
- Best practices for transitioning to NCFast for Medicaid redeterminations
- Keeping workers motivated.
- Dealing with burnout of workers and high turnover.....also how to incorporate temporary workers in to the staff
- Adaptive challenge- hard to plan ahead when you don't know what's coming or when
- Normally successful workers feeling suddenly inadequate
- Keeping people looking forward and not looking back to how things were done in the past
- We used to be able to have or find answers for workers. This is not as easy to do anymore, as we sometimes cannot get answers we need ourselves.
- Frustrated workers with not being able to meet deadlines and dealing with system challenges.
- Finding it hard to keep staff positive and upbeat when not feeling positive or upbeat myself
- As a leader, there is a huge inadequacy when dealing with customers who are not getting their benefits - before we used to have the answerers, now with NC FAST - we have no clue how to help the customer with their needs.
- I agree, before we could give our client a time frame as to when they could expect their benefits, now I have to tell them I cannot give them a date of when to expect their benefits.
- I hate not being able to provide great customer service.....I feel bad for these people

Feedback on this Event

Participant responses to this question included the following:

- Thank you for providing these sessions. It does help to hear that our issues are shared in many agencies - especially our deep concern for our staff who have faced so many challenges.
- This has been very helpful.
- This has been helpful. Looking forward to the next one. Thanks
- Yes, it makes us feel better that we are not the only ones struggling.
- Will this be shared with NCFAST staff as well?
- Thank you from Buncombe County. This was very helpful.
- Thank you for the training and your time
- Looking forward to future webinars!
- Outstanding training. Also some aspects would benefit staff. Thank you.
- I look forward to future webinars. The training was great!
- Thank you so much to everyone for putting this together - dating myself...the regional offices for DSS used to provide Supervisor Training, when the regional offices were disbanded, the training was no longer available - hopefully there will be more of these to come as we all need refreshers and help developing/refreshing skills to deal with the new challenges we are facing.

Participant Ideas about Transfer of Learning

What's one way this information will help you with your work?

Participant responses to this question included the following:

- Identifying the type of problems that we are facing and deciding the appropriate action for the problem.
- The training has been great, it has affirmed for me that during this transitional period, we as leaders can sharpen our adaptive skills. The day can become so filled with technical decisions.
- It gives us a different approach at looking at problems. Gives us a different way to think about solutions.
- Recognizing the difference between technical & adaptive challenges and seeing that others are dealing with and have the same concerns
- It's been helpful to know the difference between Technical/Adaptive Changes/Challenges and how to go forward as a leader. Thanks..
- We feel the Principles of Partnership will be helpful as we move forward on this bold new journey
- This information will assist us as we transition to NCFAST
- To always categorize the challenge/problem as technical or adaptive.
- NC FAST is not only a learning experience for our staff but also for our supervisors in their daily activities with their staff.
- [This event will help me remember] that every problem/challenge can't be dealt with in the same manner!