



ARTS ENTERPRISE
arlington  n arts

Arts Enterprise Institute

*Arts Leadership in the
Community*

+ Arts Leadership in the Community

Goals:

- Understand key dimensions about leadership
- Identify leadership skills and behaviors that help achieve this leading role
- Explore what it means for an arts organization or artist to lead in the community
- Identity how to develop leadership skills and approaches

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Me:

- ❑ Leadership positions
- ❑ Research: On Being a Chief Executive (see www.nonprofitleadership.net)
- ❑ Observation of small to medium-size nonprofits in NoVA over last 10 years.
- ❑ Read 13 of the 192,000 items on Amazon that include the word Leadership in title.....
- ❑ Interest

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Please introduce yourself:

- ✓ Name
- ✓ Organization, if applicable
- ✓ Position/role
- ✓ The main reason you're here to explore this topic



Arts Leadership in the Community



Proposed plan for the session:

- ❑ How you see your current leadership successes and challenges
- ❑ An organizing principle: adapting to your environment
- ❑ Exploring what we mean by leadership: who does it, what do they do and when
- ❑ Digging deeper: arts leadership in the community
- ❑ Developing leadership:
 - ❑ In oneself
 - ❑ In other staff and peers
 - ❑ In boards

Lecturettes, exercises, debate and a 'workbook'

Recording

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Please note down your main recent and current leadership successes and challenges (up to 5/6)

(We'll be coming back to these)

+ Organizing Principle





Arts Leadership in the Community



Please, in pairs, discuss and agree answers to these questions:

1. Who 'does' leadership?
2. What sort of purposes are those who exercise leadership trying to achieve – what are they trying to bring about?
3. When/in what circumstances do they do this?

Please capture your answers in the workbook

+ Who 'does' leadership?



+ Who 'does' leadership

Leadership as:

- Leader(s) and followers
- Followers:
 - Authorize
 - Constrain
 - Substitute
 - Lead
- Position (formal authority but also literal position – in front)
- Person (e.g. Born, not made)
- **Process (Activity)**

+ When/in what circumstances do they do this?

Types of situation or problem:

Technical (Tame)

- Matter of expertise
- There's a routine response:
 - Rule (policy, protocol)
 - Cultural

(Can be complex)

Adaptive (Wicked)

- Mismatch between what an organization/person wants (values,) and reality
- Mismatch between what it/she needs to be able to do to adapt and capacity
- Conflict between what different people value/want
- Addressing it means someone or group has to change values, beliefs or habits of action

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Please look back at your main recent and current leadership successes and challenges and categorize them as Technical or Adaptive

Please capture your answers in the workbook



Importance of Adaptive/Technical Distinction



- Adaptive challenges/needs: change in values, beliefs, habits of behavior
- Changing these = loss, takes time and attention
- People will avoid, if they can: will want the 'leader' to take the strain
- But if they don't change, organization or individual artist, won't adapt, so cannot survive and thrive
- This requires a different set of activities and skills and behaviors from routine or technical solutions (for want of better terms, leadership vs management)
- Understand the difference, and you can allocate your time and energy more efficiently....



What sort of purposes are those who exercise leadership trying to achieve?



- **Reinforcing why you do what you do – mission**
- **Diagnosing what's going on**
- **Drawing attention to need to change: grow, find a different niche..**
- **Creating alignment on direction - strategizing**
- **Changing the environment** (e.g. Building partnerships, advocacy)
- **Helping people/groups to change their values, beliefs, habits of action:**
 - Sensemaking (help give meaning to events and the need to respond to them)
 - Building commitment and optimism
 - Building trust and cooperation
 - Encouraging and facilitating collective learning
 - Managing politics (a good thing)

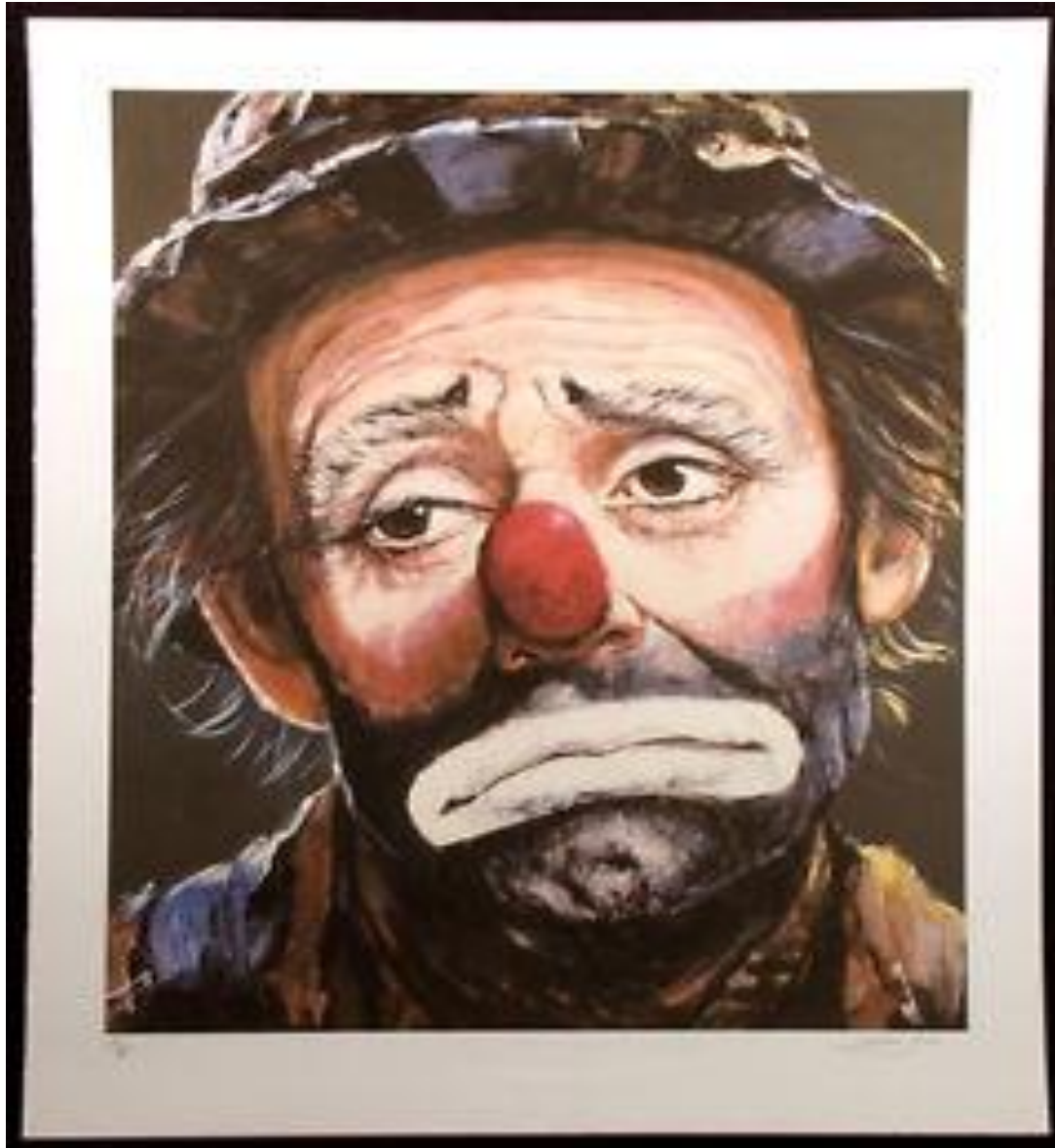
+ In what context?

You're doing this in the context of:

- ❑ Staff and volunteer management
- ❑ Managing exhibits, productions, gig
- ❑ Handling the finances
- ❑ Supporting the board
- ❑ Sorting out facilities
- ❑ Raising money
- ❑ Stakeholder relations
- ❑ Marketing
- ❑ Being accountable



+ The Risk





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In the same pairs as before, please discuss what are the three most important leadership purposes for you, as an arts leader/artist in your current context?



Arts Leadership in Action

+ Arts Leadership in Action

I propose the motion:

Inasmuch as: nonprofits are organizations whose exemption from tax is justified by their delivery of public good to the community; the community contains residents, other civic organizations and businesses; a good citizen engages with all these parties.....

Arts groups and artists in Arlington County should adopt community-first missions, in which their main goal is to provide tangible or direct intangible benefits to everybody in the County through their artistic endeavors.

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Leaderly activity in tackling this kind of challenge:

- Establish a structure for the work (process, timetable ground rules..)
- Frame the discussion for the people who are involved, in terms of mission and the need to adapt
- Get every view on the table
- Articulate the competing claims – make clear who loses what
- Contain the rising tension
- Enable the different parties to generate experiments to make the change
- Stop people from avoiding tackling the issue



Developing leadership skills and approaches



What sort of purposes are those who exercise leadership trying to achieve?

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† Developing leadership skills and behaviors

- “A human being should be able to change a diaper, plan an invasion, butcher a hog, design a building, write a sonnet, set a bone, comfort the dying, take orders, give orders, solve equations, program a computer, cook a tasty meal, fight well and die gallantly.”
Robert Heinlein
- “An omniscient leader is a figment of the irresponsible follower’s imagination”

+ Developing leadership skills and behaviors



In your table group, please:

Based on our discussions so far and the list of critical leadership purposes you described, discuss and agree what are the most important skills for a leader in a small to medium-sized arts organization or for an individual artist?

† Developing leadership skills and behaviors

How to get on top of things I: Getting up on the Balcony



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† Developing leadership skills and behaviors

How to get on top of things I: Getting up on the Balcony

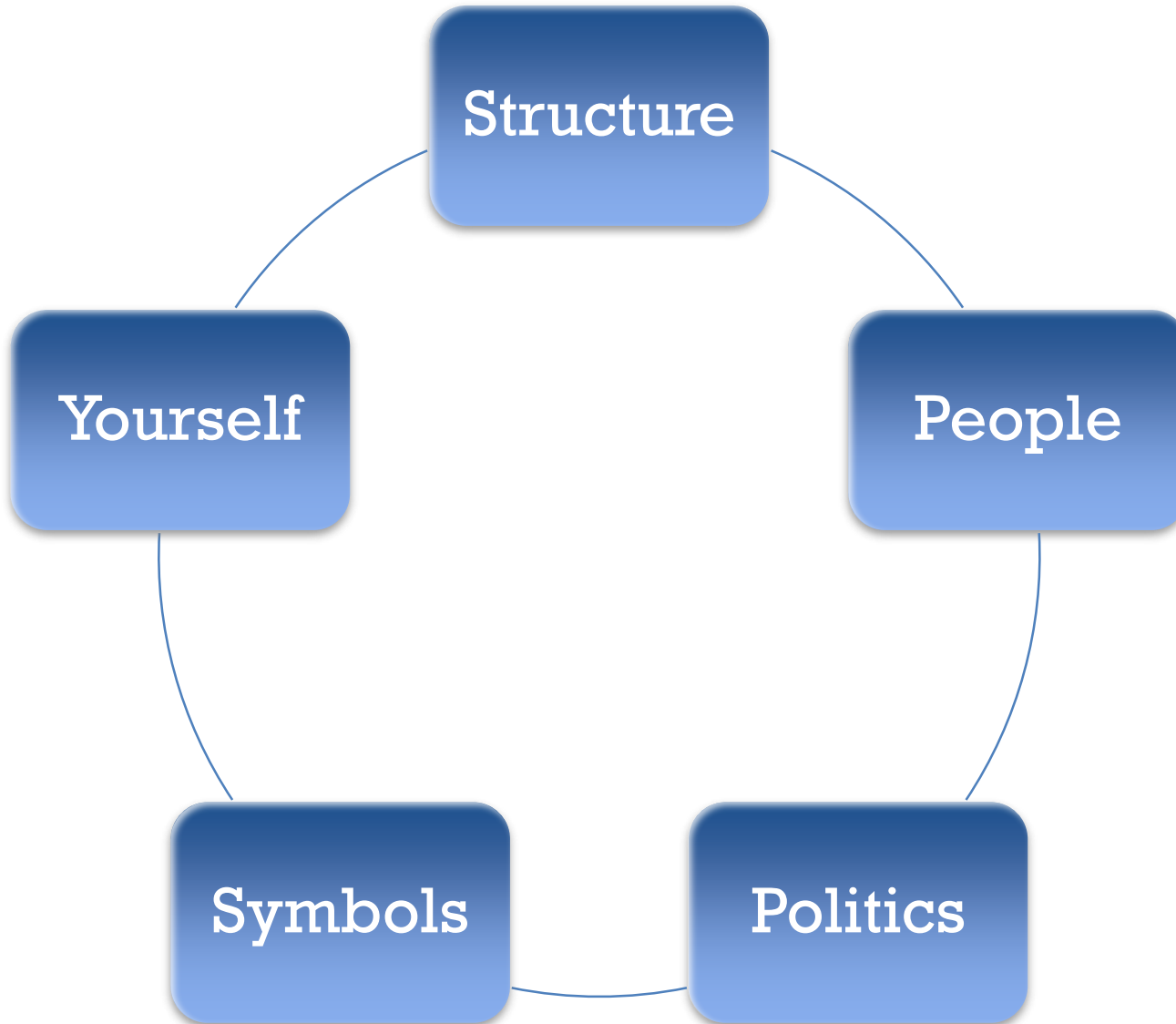
You watching the venue, the band, the other dancers **and you** (what's going on outside the organization, across the organization and in your thoughts and behavior

+ Developing leadership skills and behaviors

How to get on top of things II: Breaking the work down:

- The rule of three: no more than 3 major initiatives at a time, including 'non-leadership' work
- Just focus on:
 - Role modeling the kind of behavior you want to see from others
 - Choose to pay attention to, measure and provide resources only for what is agreed to be important
 - React to a crisis in the way you'd like your boss to react
 - Make sure you select, promote and acknowledge/reward only people who will be good followers/leaders

+ How to get on top of things III: See what's in your toolkit



+ Developing leadership skills and behaviors



Which three leadership skills and approaches will I concentrate on developing first?

+ Boards

- Board-centered approach by Executive Director
- Barrier to adaptability if not connected to community and/or can't help with changing values, beliefs or habits of behavior
- Most powerful if deeply connected to and can channel information to community networks

What do you think are the implications of this for recruiting board members and supporting your board?

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