



WESTERN STATES TRIPARTITE
OWNERS + CONTRACTORS + BOILERMAKERS
SEEKING SOLUTIONS FOR A STRONGER INDUSTRY

Navigating Change Leadership Capacities for Our Time

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Western States Tripartite Conference • April 8-9, 2024





Rank your organization's top 3 capabilities below starting with the strongest.

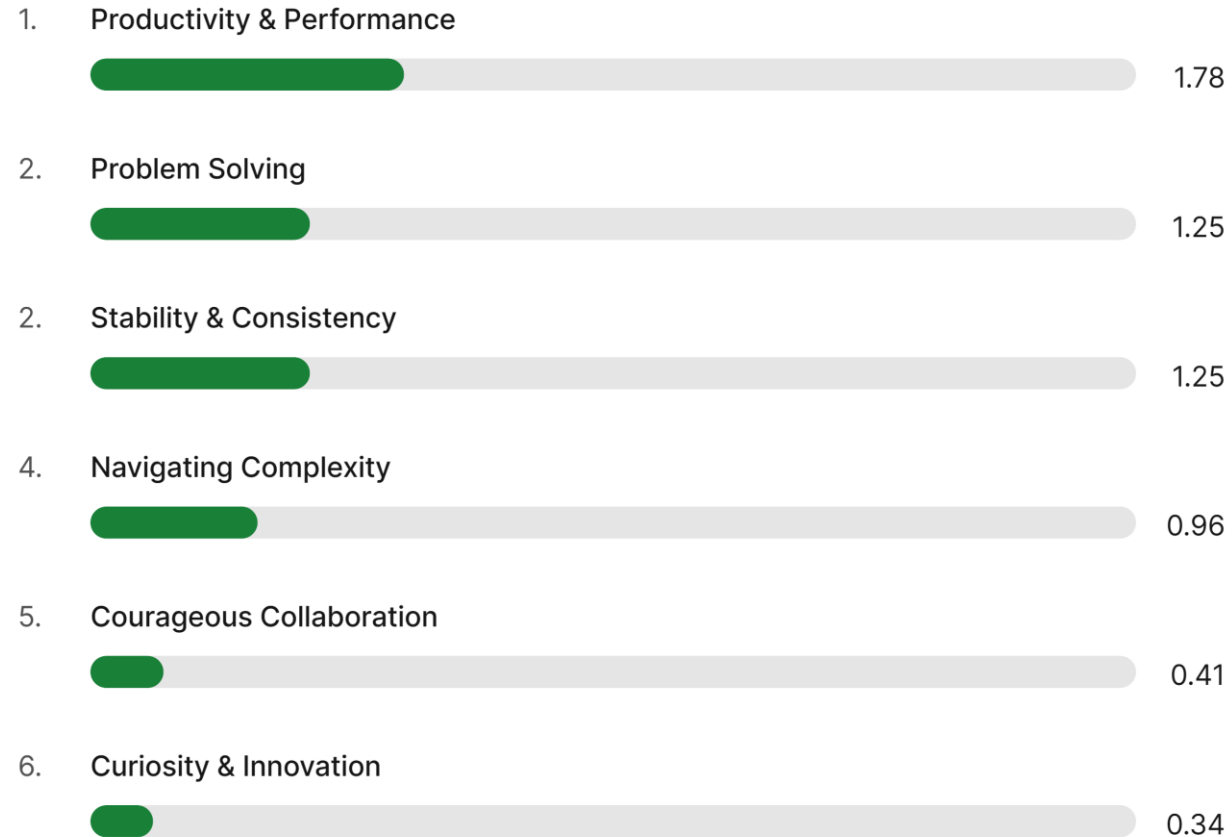
Ranking Poll



79 votes



79 participants



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Inquiry

*What practices or perspectives do we hold
that have us stuck in the past?*

Leadership Capacities of *Our Time*

1

Navigating Complexity

2

Courageous Collaboration

Resource: “Certain Uncertainty” by Des Dearlove, Thinker50, and other recommendations in “Billy’s bookbag”
<https://geniiearth.com/perspectives-news/>

“The number one thing that keeps leaders around the world up at night: paradoxes”

Resource: “Both/And Thinking: Embracing Creative Tensions to Solve Your Toughest Problems”

What is a paradox?

Two (or more) distinct *and* seemingly contradictory concepts, ideas, or statements where:

Both are simultaneously
right or true.

Both are useful as long as they are effectively
navigated to serve a greater purpose

They are often pitted against each other as problems to
solve rather than *polarities to be managed*

Problem-solving vs Polarity Management



Navigating Complexity

Examples of Polarities

Leadership Polarities

- Clarity and Flexibility
- Self-assured and Humble
- Directive and participatory
- Task-focused and relationship-focused

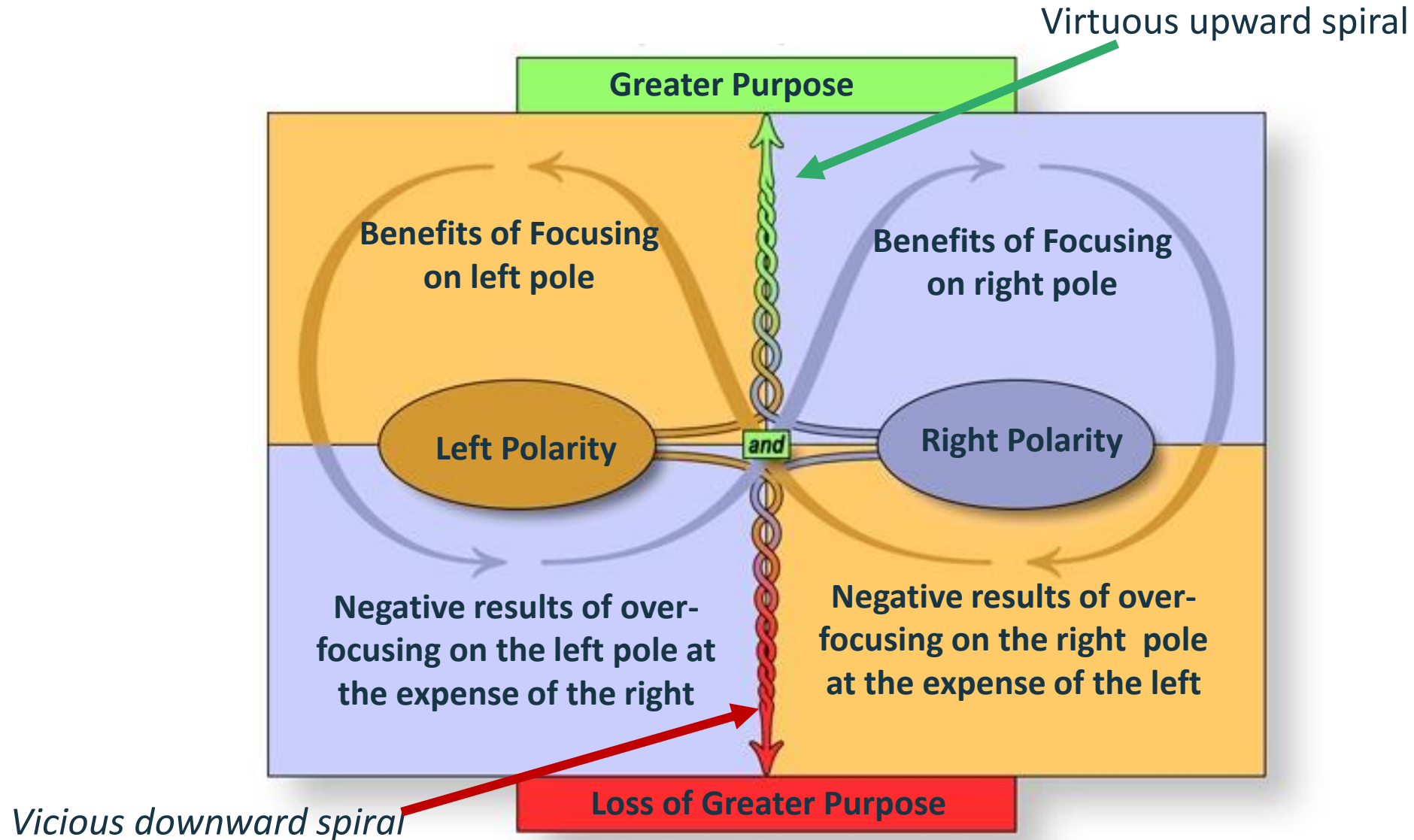
Organizational Polarities

- Centralization and decentralization
- Short-term and long-term
- Cost and quality
- Continuity and transformation
- Safety and productivity
- Mission and margin

Industry Polarities Today

- Sustainability vs. Scalability in Energy
- Centralization vs. Decentralization in Finance
- Privacy vs. Personalization in Technology
- Automation vs. Humanization in Customer Service
- Globalization vs. Localization in Retail
- Innovation vs. Regulation in Healthcare
- Openness vs. Security in Information Technology
- Speed vs. Accuracy in Manufacturing
- Competition vs. Collaboration in the Automotive Industry

Navigating Complexity By Managing Polarities



Ask :

What is the greater purpose?

Is the challenge we are facing a problem to be solved or a polarity to navigate?

How can I apply *both/and* thinking to both sides of this polarity to assess the most effective strategy to move us toward our greater purpose?

A word about both/and thinking:

Practice eliminating the word “but”
from conversation.

Where in your work are you noticing the need to collaborate in ways you never have before, and/or with people whom you've never collaborated before?

What does it mean to be a courageous collaborator in these times?

- Bravely lead for the future (not the past)
- Re-assess potential collaborators
- Commitment to Transparency
- Willingness to be Vulnerable
- Create a culture of curiosity to support innovation
- Shared accountability

*And this means you have
the willingness and
capability for **steelman-ing**
perspectives you don't
agree with or don't
understand*

“Strawman-ing”

“They just want to take away our rights!”

“People who receive welfare are lazy and don’t want to work”

“Oil companies are greedy people who don’t care about the environment”.

“They don’t care about putting people out of jobs”

“Homeless people are all drug addicts who don’t deserve our help”

Any thing that starts with “the only thing they care about is (fill in the blank)”

Strawman-ing



A form of “othering”;
When someone misrepresents or oversimplifies another’s perspective to make it easier to attack or refute. The term “straw man” comes from the idea of constructing a weak and easily defeated version of the opponent’s argument, similar to attacking a man made of straw rather than engaging with the real debate.

The opposite of strawman-ing, it involves representing a person's perspective in its strongest form before critiquing or disagreeing with it. The term "steel man" is derived from the idea of reinforcing a differing perspective to make it as strong and robust as possible before engaging with it.

“Steelman-ing”



Why Steelman-ing

1. Expands Understanding
2. Ensures Representation
3. Increases Engagement
4. Overall Strengthens a greater purpose
5. More productive & respectful

Courageous collaborators are committed to:

A larger whole than one's own part.

Having all involved take on a similar commitment.

Having the collaborators be guided by current reality, not opinion or ideology.

Having all voices and views heard, without judgment or prejudice.

A vision, a stand for a future, that this collaboration can accomplish.

Communication in good faith.

Ongoing updating/iterating the mental maps and models of the situation at which the group is at work.

For the next poll, please consider:

1. *Who the groups are in the room (owners, contractors, boilermakers)*
2. *You have collaborated for decades*
3. *In a new age of business together*
4. *Step out of the past and your own perspective and take an “eagle’s view”*
 - Notice our patterns of interaction
 - Consider our past and our future

What practice or perspective do we hold today that we most need to let go of to be successful in the future?

Letting go of the past:

1. Thinking our way, the old way, is the best way.
2. Status quo
3. Our way is the best way
4. Change is always hard
5. We need to get rid of “we’ve always done it this way” mentality when approaching problem solving
6. Stop living in the past of doing things, change is good for progression
7. Quit being closed minded to change
8. This is how we’ve always done it.
9. Because that is the way we have always done it
10. Fear of change
11. This is the way we have always done it
12. Upholding the status quo

How and who we recruit:

1. Hiring people just like us
2. Nepotism is only so effective.
3. Scoping the new blood
4. Recruiting only who we know
5. We need to establish a content pipeline of new folks into leadership to maintain an influx of views and solutions.
6. Educate people on opportunity
7. Not accepting new people.

How we work with each other:

1. Not forgiving honest mistakes
2. Not being willing to challenge regardless of status or position
3. Not speaking up
4. Our way or the highway
5. That the next generation is lazy.
6. Authoritative leadership styles
7. Quit working in silos and not be closed minded
8. Emotional intelligence
9. Listen to our employees
10. Distrust in each other as people and organizations
11. Closed minded
12. It's not us versus them.
13. Not asking enough questions
14. Create an innovative environment rather than just clarity
15. Resentful
16. Procrastination
17. Cause tom said

How we work with others:

1. Fixed T&M contracting towards more performance-based contracts and rewards
2. Cost.
3. Costs
4. Customers only care about cost.
5. Clients think they can manage contractor manpower
6. We can work with environmentalist and still survive
7. Involving the contractor in training and recruiting
8. Contractors are making too much money
9. That our scope of influence in the industry is only industrial

How we feel about our work:

1. Get R done
2. “I’m the only one that can do this”
3. We are only Gas and Oil.
4. That what got us here will not get us toward prosperity in the future
5. Get out of our own way
6. That no one else can do the work we do. There are other trades and entities that can execute boilermaker work just as well. Pride shouldn't be an inhibitor
7. Energy evolution doesn't not mean that we don't provide the energy of the future
8. Bidding other technologies





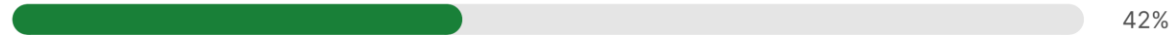
What is the one capability we most need to develop to be successful in the future?

Multiple Choice Poll ☒ 69 votes 69 participants

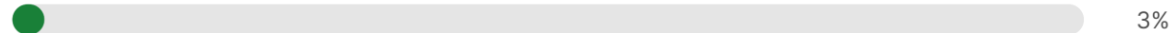
Productivity & performance - 6 votes



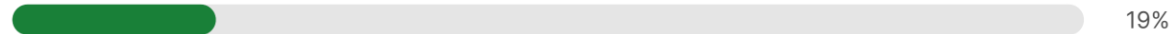
Courageous Collaboration - 29 votes



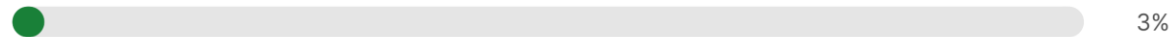
Problem-solving - 2 votes



Navigating Complexity - 13 votes



Stability & Consistency - 2 votes



Curiosity & Innovation - 17 votes



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Thank you

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