



# When everyone leads

the toughest challenges get seen and solved.

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everyone  
leads** the  
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- Our organizations are more flexible, equitable and open to change.
- Employees are more engaged and fulfilled.
- People trust the organization more and feel empowered to make things better.
- We make progress on our most important challenges.

Research by ORS Impact and Third Floor Research  
available at [www.kansasleadershipcenter.org](http://www.kansasleadershipcenter.org)

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Leadership is mobilizing others to make progress on adaptive challenges.

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## **Leadership and Authority – Using Authority Wisely**



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# When Everyone Leads **we shift our perspective...**



## Person-Centric Model

- Leadership is a position.
- The person in authority sets the goals and does the leading.
- Followers focus on and take direction from the "leader."

## Challenge-Centric Model

- Leadership is an activity
- Everyone can see and seize their moments.
- Everyone focuses on the same leadership challenges.





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	TECHNICAL	ADAPTIVE
PROBLEM	clear	requires learning
SOLUTION	clear	requires learning
WHOSE WORK IS IT?	experts, authority	stakeholders
TYPE OF WORK	efficient	act experimentally
TIMELINE	ASAP	longer term
EXPECTATIONS	fix problem	make progress
ATTITUDE	confidence, skill	curiosity



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TASK OF AUTHORITY	TECHNICAL	ADAPTIVE
PROTECTION	- Protect from external threats	- Disclose external threats - Limit internal threats by making leadership less risky for others
DIRECTION	- Provide problem definition and solution	- Identify the challenge - Frame key questions and issues - Resist the allure of the quick fix
ORDER		
Orientation	- Orient people to current roles	- Disorient current roles; resist orienting people to roles too quickly; acknowledge loss
Conflict	- Restore order	- Expose conflict or let it emerge; name competing values
Norms	- Maintain norms	- Challenge norms or let them be challenged

From *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*, Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 28 and *When Everyone Leads*, O'Malley & Fabris McBride, 2002.



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## AUTHORITY DYNAMICS IN AN ADAPTIVE CHALLENGE

What are the ways authority dynamics are showing up in your challenge (behaviors, patterns, structure, culture, formal & informal)?



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## WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOU?

**#1**

**I am in a high authority position.**

I'm trying to navigate the pressure and constraints in my position of authority.

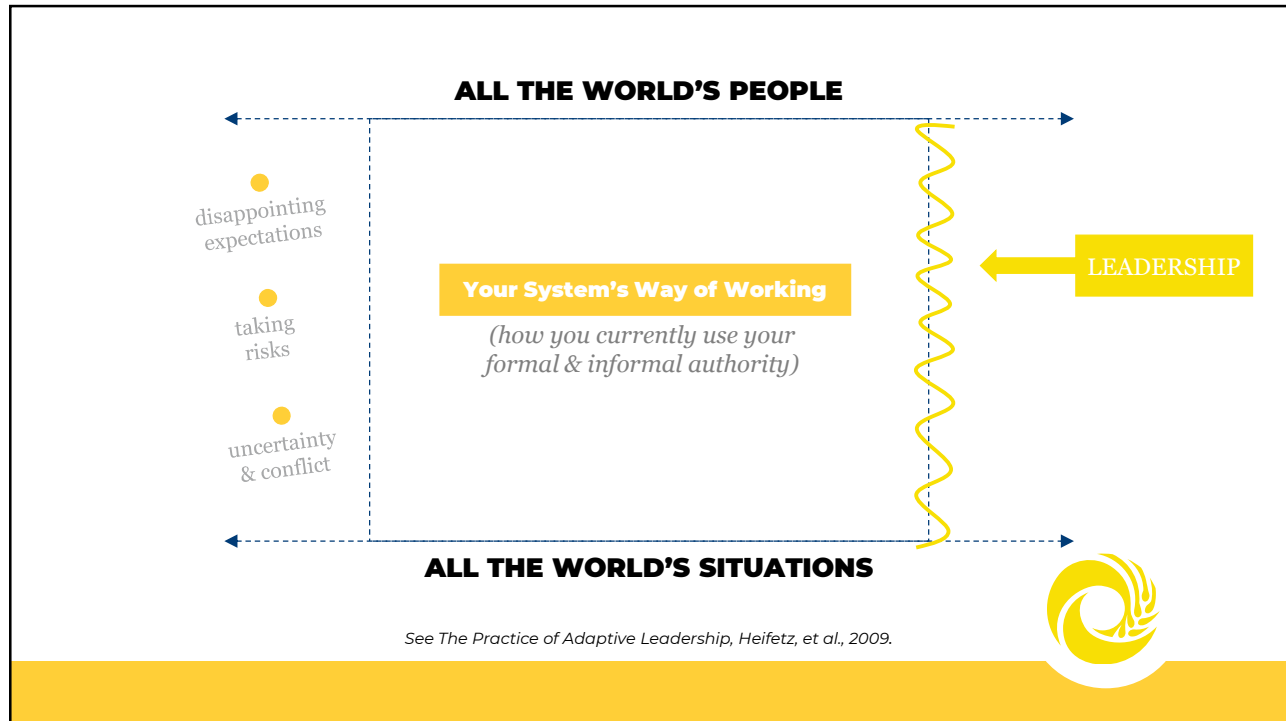
**#2**

**I want more from those in authority.**

I understand there is pressure being in a high authority role. But I need more from them.



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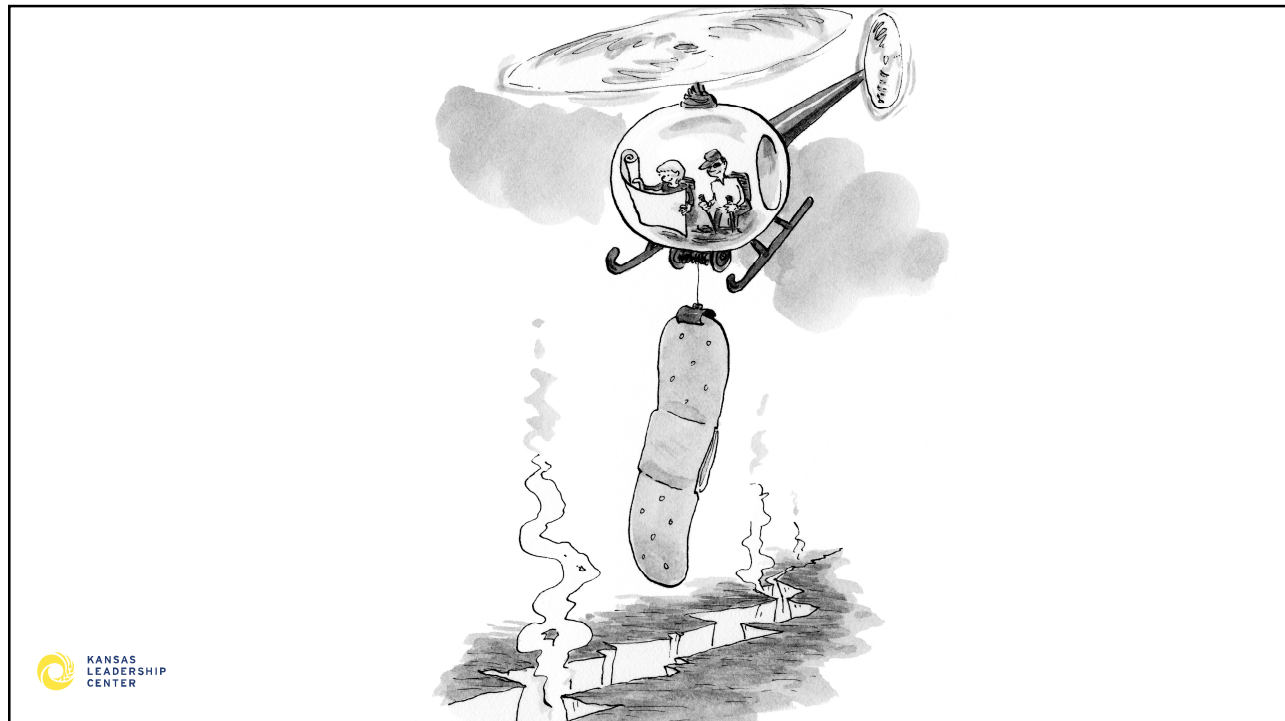
## USING YOUR AUTHORITY WISELY

How can you help yourself & others...

- Partner
- Create Holding Environments
- Make Leadership Less Risky for Others
- Create a Trustworthy Process




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**Most of us resist the idea that authority is not enough to solve our most important challenges.**

1. We want someone to come to the rescue.
2. We like to blame people with more authority.
3. When we have authority, we don't want to disappoint people.



The Kansas Leadership Center logo is in the bottom left corner.

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## Start **where you have influence.**

1. You have influence with those you supervise.
2. Your people are part of the problem and solution.
3. Use your authority to help them focus on what's most important.
4. Encourage them to practice leading.
5. Help them tolerate discomfort.



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# TAKE YOUR **NEXT STEP** WITH KLC

Scan to complete a brief survey  
and explore ways to stay connected.



**STEP 1:**  
AUTHORIZE  
YOURSELF

**STEP 2:**  
GAIN  
SKILLS

**STEP 3:**  
MOBILIZE  
OTHERS

The graphic features a blue background with a white wavy line that passes through three colored circles: yellow, green, and dark blue. A white arrow points from the QR code towards the woman in the background image.

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