# Experiments in Leading through Influence:
## *Reflections from a Group of Emerging Technical Leaders*

**INCOSE Institute for Technical Leadership (TLI) Cohort 4**

*Presented to INCOSE Chesapeake Chapter*
*April 21, 2021*
*David Fadeley, ESEP*
*Myra Parsons Gross, ESEP*

# INCOSE Institute for Technical Leadership (TLI)

TLI is a global network of INCOSE members committed to improving technical leadership skills to better address the complex socio-technical challenges of the twenty-first century.

TLI is a two-year commitment of coaching and mentoring to increase self-awareness, improve understanding of complexity, and provide experience in leading through influence in the presence of ambiguity and uncertainty.

Upon completion, participants continue learning from each other and share knowledge as members of a vibrant diverse and growing network, for the benefit of their organizations, INCOSE and the world at large.

Participation is voluntary, requires active participation, nomination by INCOSE Chapter Leadership, and selection by INCOSE.

*https://www.incose.org/about-incose/tli*

# Experiments in Leading through Influence

## Executive Summary, IS2020 Paper Authored by TLI Cohort 4:
Technical Leaders, 17 representing 7 countries, 9 time zones, sharing knowledge and learning together



**Row 1:** Dr Chris Browne *(Australian National University)*, CDR Jeffrey Brown *(US Navy, VA, USA)*, John Cadigan (*Prime Solutions Group AZ, USA*), Dr Heidi Davidz *(Aerojet Rocketdyne, FL, USA)*, David Fadeley *(Integrity Technology Consultants, MD, USA)*, Heather Feli *(Ensign-Bickford Aerospace & Defense, CT, USA)*, Karl Geist *(Precise Systems, MD, USA)*, Myra Parsons Gross *(JONY Software Solutions, MD, USA)*

**Row 2:** Masaatsu Kusunoki *(Nissan Motor Corp, Japan)*, Clement Lee *(Thales, Singapore)*, Al Meyer *(Lockheed Martin, GA, USA)*, Shailesh Patel (UTC, India),Louis-Emmanuel Romana *(Airbus, France)*, Bradley Spencer *(Nova Systems, Australia)*, Lauren Stolzar *(Grubhub, NY, USA)*, Luca Stringhetti *(SKA Organization, UK)*, Ming-Wah Tham *(Thales, Singapore)*
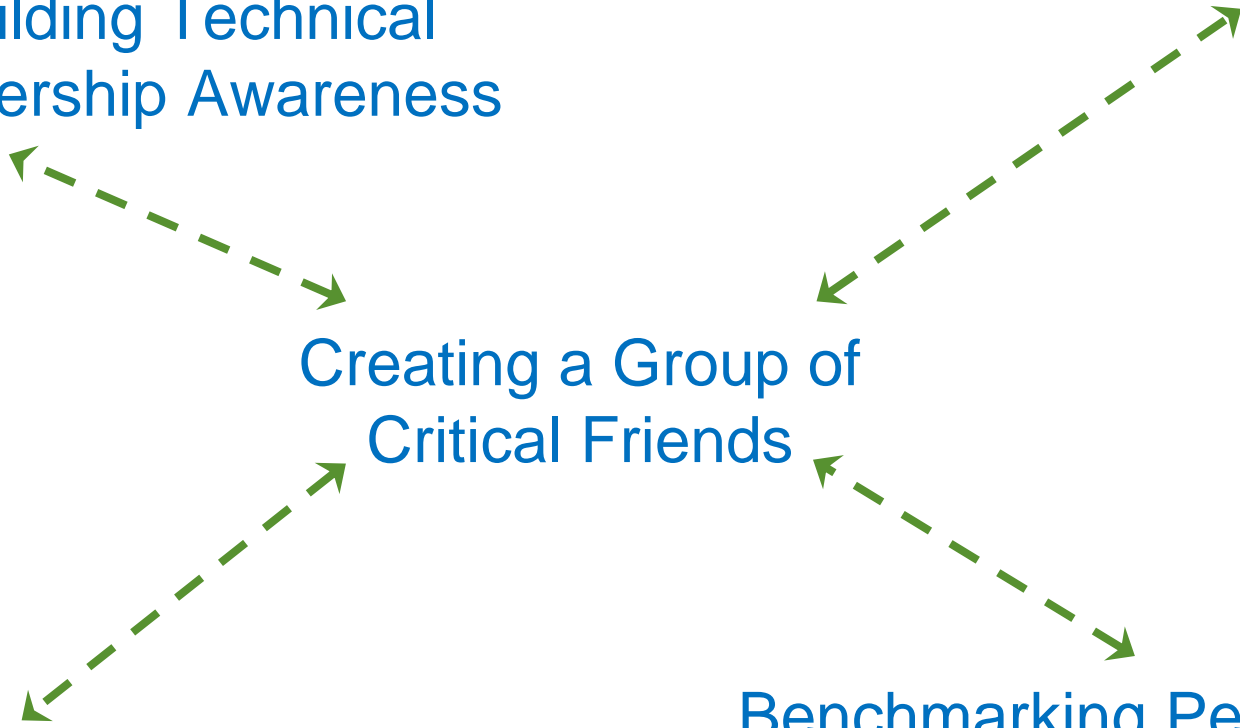
# Vignettes in Five Themes

Building Technical
Leadership Awareness

Navigating the Tension
Between Power and Influence

Creating a Group of
Critical Friends

Developing Capacity Around
Transition and Change

Benchmarking Performance
for Shared Development

# Our Take-away Message

Exploring the Complex Domain of the Cynefin Framework

## PROBE - SENSE - RESPOND

**Motivation**
**Curiosity**
**Common-sense**

**Thought-sharing**
**Reflection**
**Contribution**

**Action**
**Delivering**
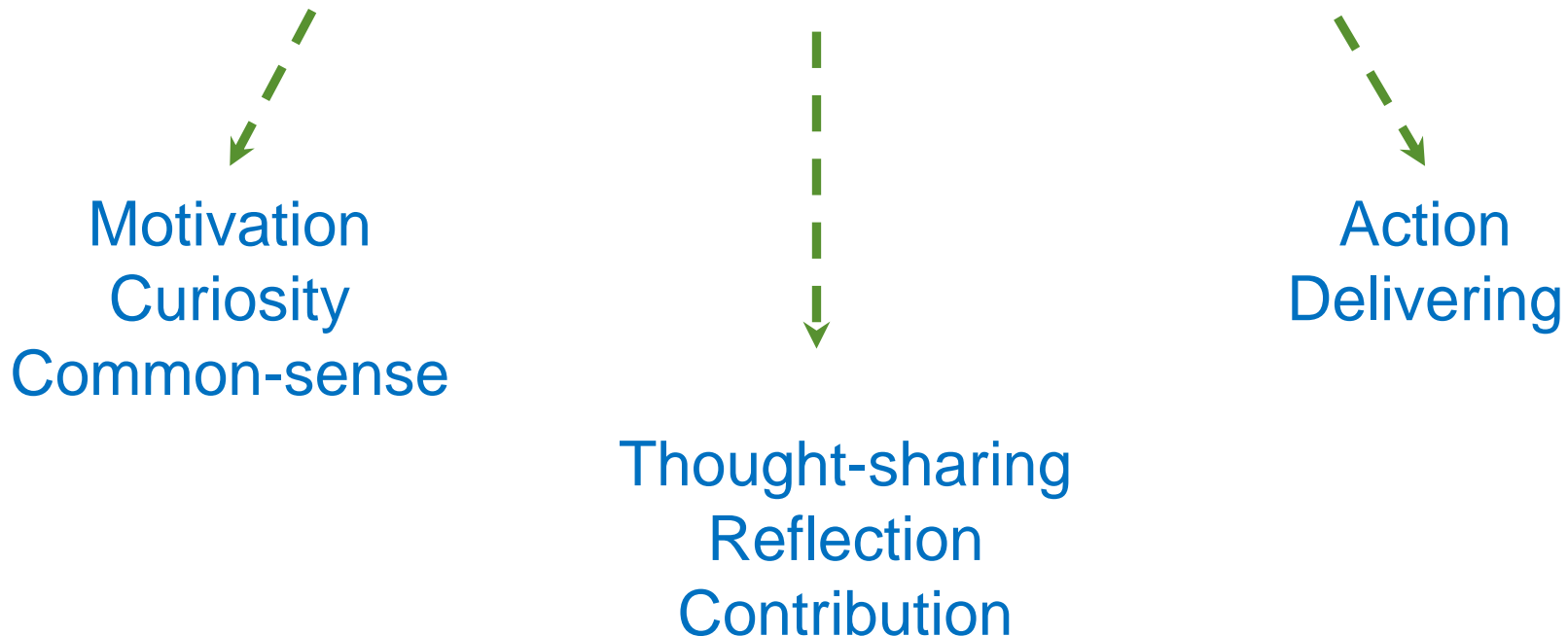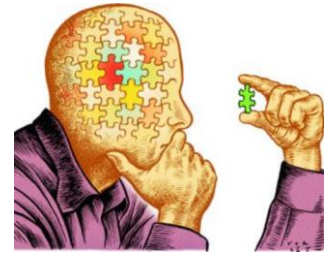
# Building Technical Leadership Awareness

- Develop Leadership Skills through self-awareness, network of leaders, and understanding of the context for leadership and influence

- Maintain awareness of your leadership skill set, strengths and weaknesses, to facilitate growth as an effective leader

- Strengthen your tool kit to effectively influence others in the technical and non-technical domains

- Value your own technical knowledge, and build confidence in your own technical acumen

**SELF AWARENESS**

- Assess your leadership style and how others perceive you

- Recognize diversity of thinking and the importance of alternative leadership approaches

**DIVERSITY**

# Navigating the Tension Between Power and Influence

- These reflections in power, personality and influence, highlight the importance of the technical leader operating in a probe-sense-respond paradigm

- Five types of power (physical, resource, positional, expert, personal) are the cornerstone of our experiments in leading through influence

- Personality types (e.g. DiSC profile of Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Conscientiousness) of those we seek to influence need to be accommodated as well as an awareness of our own type

- In many cases, an amount of expert power can open a door to an opportunity to influence, but focusing on growing personal power is required to be effective and sustain the influence with key stakeholders

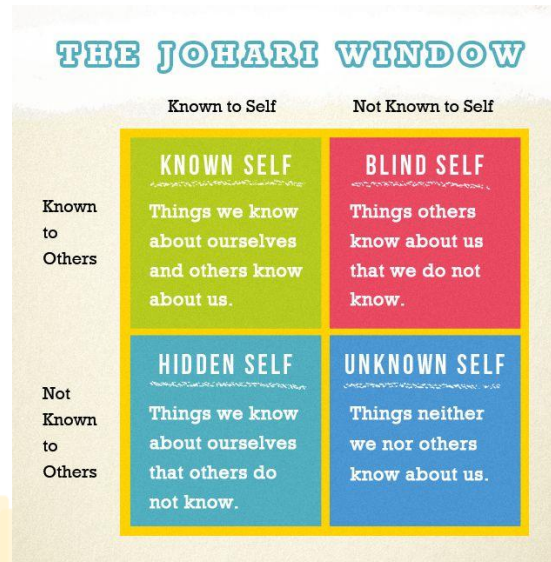**Appropriate Power & Personality Awareness** ➡ **Effective Influence**

# Benchmarking Performance for Shared Development

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) focuses on Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership:

- Modeling the Way,
- Inspiring a Shared Vision,
- Challenging the Process,
- Enabling Others to Act,
- Encouraging the Heart.



SO ADORABLE ... HE THINKS HE'S PEOPLE.

A TECHNICAL LEADER

Dan Thompson/Distributed by Universal Uclick via CartoonStock.com



THE JOHARI WINDOW

|  | Known to Self | Not Known to Self |
|---|---|---|
| Known to Others | **KNOWN SELF** Things we know about ourselves and others know about us. | **BLIND SELF** Things others know about us that we do not know. |
| Not Known to Others | **HIDDEN SELF** Things we know about ourselves that others do not know. | **UNKNOWN SELF** Things neither we nor others know about us. |

# Developing Capacity Around Future Transition and Change

- Technical Leadership is not restricted to the acquisition of "hard" technical skills
- Tailoring communication to employees' personality profiles
- Leadership skills useful in organization transition periods



The New Beginning

The Neutral Zone

Ending, Losing, Letting Go

- Small experiments with "probe, sense, respond" across the organization enable the team to focus around techniques that work
- The importance of constantly changing societal factors to the Technical Leader
- Difficulty of change when context and capability need is moving faster than the organization's ability to adapt
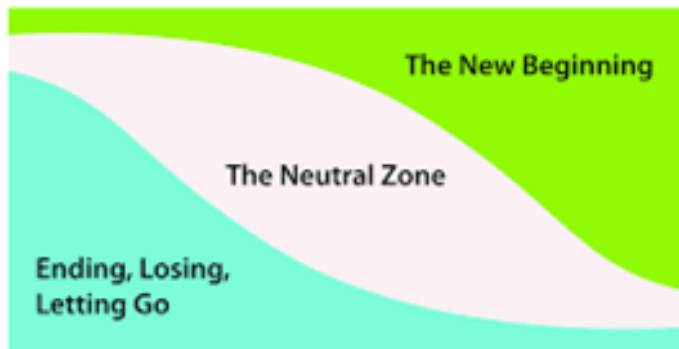
# Creating a Group of Critical Friends

- **Using networking opportunities** to create a "Group of Critical Friends" can be accomplished through life experiences, work experiences, learning experiences, diversity exposure, and decision making (Lessons Learned, both yours and others)

- **Gaining perspective through discussions**, feedback, listening and acting as soundboards for classmates have made us trusted advisors with cultural and personality diversities

- **Performing purpose driven experimentation** using blend of tools and techniques to interpret the world around us while helping overcome human biases in our decision-making process

- **Exposing the importance of taking time to reflect** and think thus helping navigate obstacles in both home and work lives

- **Working with people across cultures** and languages as a global entity can present problems in understanding ideas or solutions because of cultural differences

- **Recognizing when a teammate may have a strength**, where another may have a weakness, allows our process to assign tasking to each of us to lead using our strengths and follow using our weaknesses

# Lessons for Technical Leaders in a Global Setting

- Make time to participate

- Stay engaged outside of defined contact points

- Determine end goals and realistic plans to accomplish them

- Control our collective ambition

- **Probe**: Motivation, curiosity and common-sense

- **Sense**: Thought-sharing, reflection and contribution

- **Respond**: Acting and delivering

*Reasonably expect to see the INCOSE TLI as a vehicle for influencing future SE leadership*

# **Summary of our Experiments in Leading through Influence**

Navigating the Tension Between Power and Influence

Building Technical Leadership Awareness

Creating a Group of Critical Friends

Developing Capacity Around Transition and Change

Benchmarking Performance for Shared Development

*Requiring motivation, curiosity, common sense, thought sharing, reflection, contribution, and action to deliver*

# Acknowledgements

***Special thank you to …***

- Past INCOSE Chesapeake Chapter Presidents, Mike Pafford and Grace Crowder, for the TLI Nomination

- Our TLI Cohort 4 colleagues for the experience and continued relationships

- Our employers for their support and commitment to our participation in the TLI

**And, Appreciation to our TLI Coaches:**

- Mike Pennotti (*mpennott@stevens.edu*)
- Patrick Godfrey (*patrick.godfrey@systems-thinking.co.uk*)
- Don Gelosh (*dsgelosh@wpi.edu*)
- David Long (*david.long@vitechcorp.com*)

# Questions?