



annual conference

ADCS The Association of Directors of Children's Services
The Midland Hotel Manchester July 2017

Leadership and alternative models of delivery

ADCDS
Leading Children's Services



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Welcome

Rachael Wardell,
Chair of the ADCS Workforce Development
Policy Committee and
Corporate Director, Communities, West
Berkshire Council

ADCDS
Leading Children's Services

research
in practice

Children's social care leadership in the context of alternative delivery structures

ADCS

July 2017



Dartington

Session outline

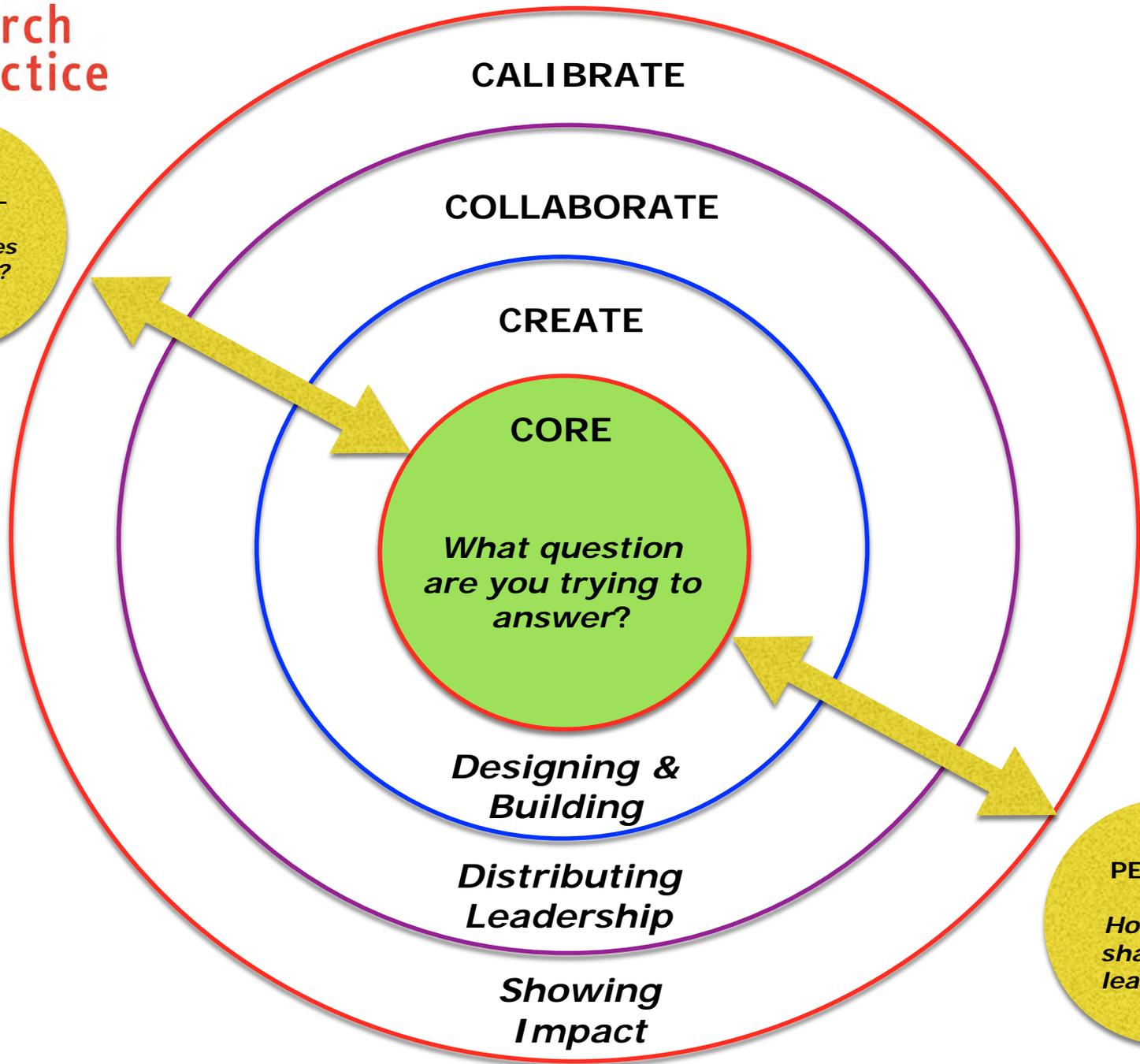
- › Outlining the series of resources being produced to support leaders tasked with developing and implementing alternative delivery models
- › Hear from those with experience of establishing and/or working within alternative delivery models
- › Discuss the leadership implications, and gaps in the knowledge base
- › Contribute to the development of the resources

Starting premise

- where children, social work practice and its leaders are being failed, intervention is both legitimate and welcome
- applying these alternative structures in other contexts arguably requires a new “leadership literacy”
- we can all benefit from developing that literacy – and potentially this carries more impact than debating the “right structure”

research in practice

PERSONAL
*What values
do I bring?*



PERSONAL
*How is this
shaping my
leadership?*

How did we get here?

- The main driver of change has been failings primarily in safeguarding - though the scope of an ADV is significantly broader
- From Colwell onwards social work has been shaped by commentary from inquiries
- During such debates the voice of social work has arguably grown weaker (and the voice of the non social work staff about ADV's is even weaker?)
- "Managerialism" added complexity but not advocacy
- The need to "do something" may have left social work falling back on (or aiming for) market based approaches

Strategy design; the what?

- Essential to be clear what it is that we are trying to transform and what that means strategically.
- Serious change in organisations changes everything - formal/informal; strategy; organisational; cultural etc. Scale of change is beyond programme management!
- Sustaining stable adaptive change (improvement) whilst conceiving a new organisation
- The importance of strategic alignment: there are different strategic 'styles' at play - from the formal to the emergent and the transformational

Leading the why and the how

- “One can lead with no more than a question in hand”
(Heifetz & Laurie)
- The strategic inflection point - where the fundamentals are changing so fast, leaders either navigate to the new or manage decline
- Requires adaptive leadership - guiding the whole organisation to share responsibility and learn as it tackles deep rooted problems, rather than be the leader who fixes the problem
- Being open to multiple questions and approaches; being able to view the profound changes being made with the intellectual objectivity of an outsider - ‘how to make the familiar strange’ (Hingley Jones, 2016 in Ruch & Julkenen (eds))

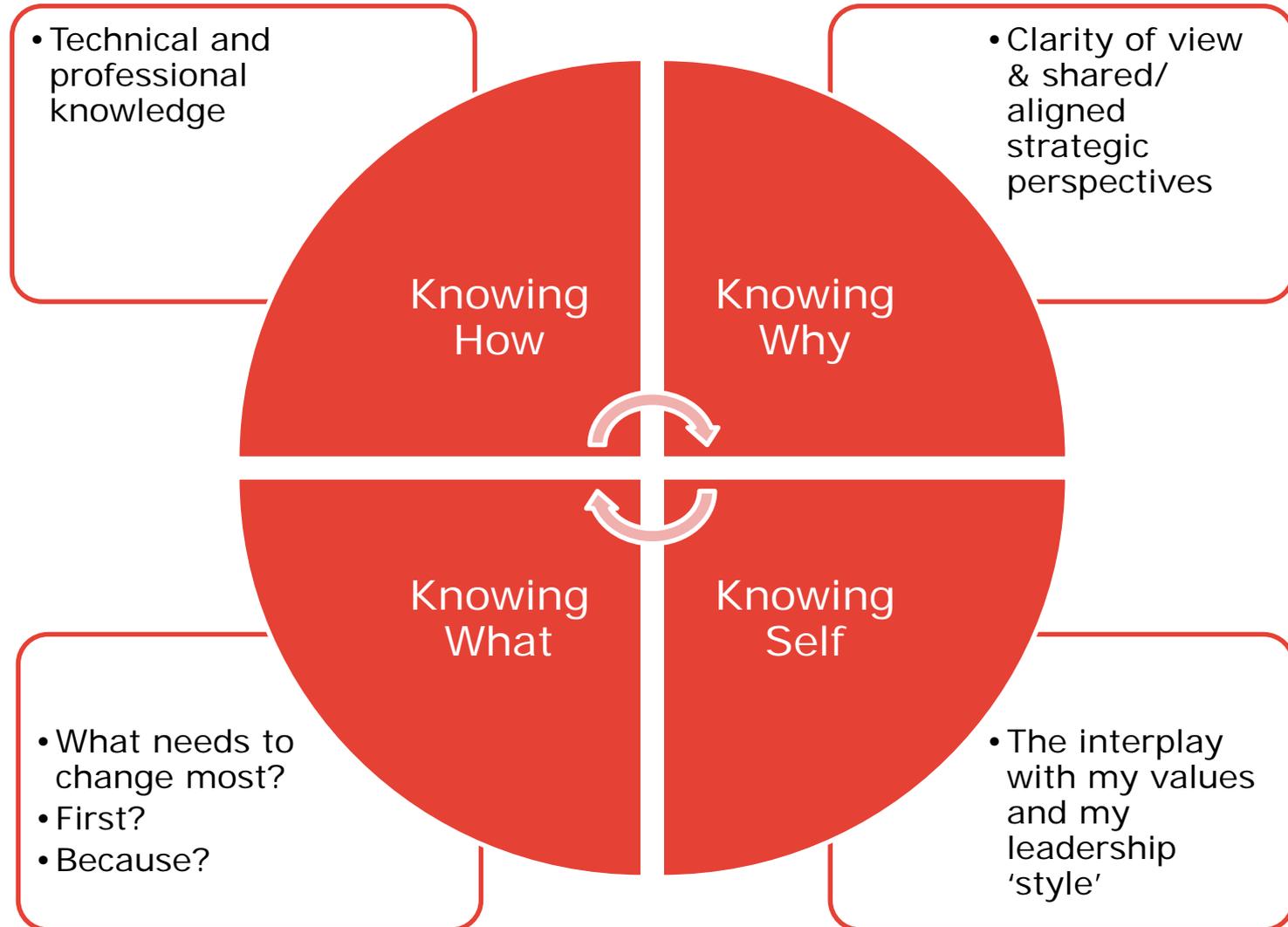
Understanding organisational lifecycles

- Where are the unique advantages for Trusts - in social work leadership, staff engagement, political independence, voice of child? (and to what extent are these replicable in other structures?)
- Coming through strategic inflection points is neither quick nor easy. It creates an unfamiliar organisation and all this entails
- The “competitive” position and advantages of an ADV is not static - and can change rapidly as organisations grow (especially through acquisition and merger)

Understanding impact

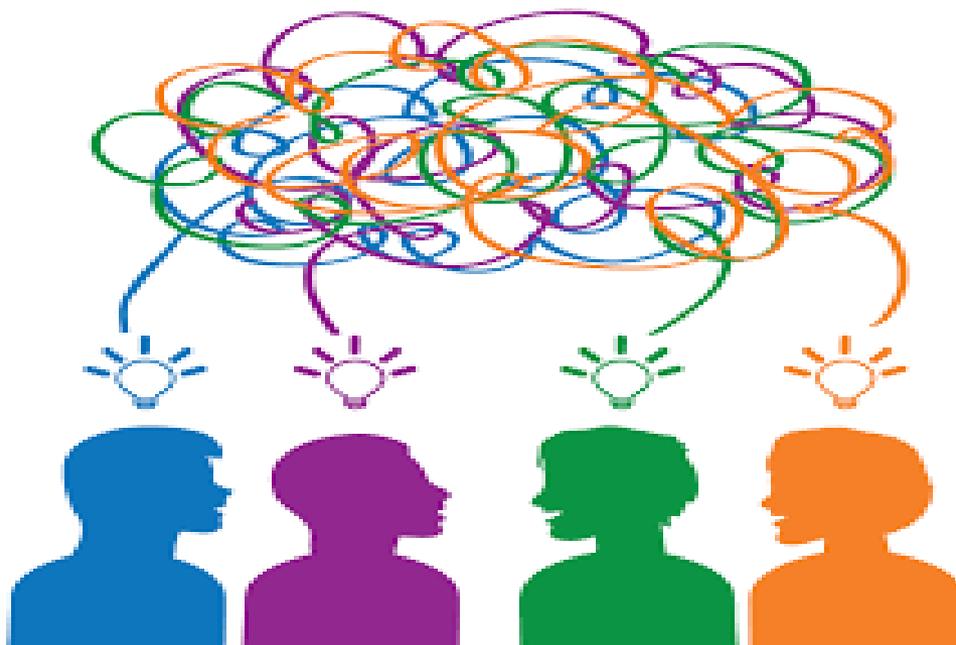
- Success means that more people want a chunk of any business and this can threaten its existence. Should success look like being good consistently in the place of origin or “acquisition”/merger?
- Navigation of complexity: commissioning; whole council/whole child relationships & partners; policy
- What does success/failure of ADVs mean in each place and for the sector? What’s the next step?
- Can a top down restructure programme evolve to become part of progressive change in public services? And what’s the voice of the sector within this?
- Values matter and culture counts... but how to capture this?

Personal leadership through complexity



Learning from those with experience of designing and/or leading ADVs

- > Mark Douglas, Doncaster Children's Services Trust
- > Nick Whitfield, Achieving for Children
- > Steve Crocker, Hampshire County Council & Isle of Wight Council





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Doncaster Children's Services Trust

Presentation to ADCS

Mark Douglas, Chief Operating Officer



Doncaster Then and Now

- History of concerns about performance locally, culminating in the 2012 Ofsted inspections which followed a series of seven serious case reviews.
- Le Grand/Wood recommended a *clean break*:
 - Reorganise structure & governance of Children's Services
 - Independence from council to enable innovation and be free of constraints of bureaucracy.
- Preferred Option: Establishment of a Trust.



Doncaster The Case For Change

- DCST is the first of its kind in the country and represents an innovative approach to developing children's social care services.
- It was established within the context of long term historic failure of corporate and service management in Doncaster with cycles of improvement and regression that were characterised by:
 - Deep rooted issues with leadership and strategy.
 - Management and oversight.
 - Core social work practice.
- Continual attempts to bring about improvements were unsuccessful and it was within this context that the Trust was established
- Through core working with DMBC and partners the Trust has implemented processes and systems to respond to areas of long standing, historic failure.
- As the first in the country there was no blueprint to draw upon.
- The Trust, DfE and Deloitte set about the task although the scale of the task should not be underestimated.
- It was a highly politicised context and was evident in the tension between DCST & DMBC.



- The various lessons cover :
 - Legal & contractual.
 - The financial arrangements.
 - The strategic relationship between the Trust & the council.
 - The order of improvement was conceptually driven showing the necessary conditions for achieving each improvement and in what order.



Base Lining Position

- Quality of practice
 - Understanding the areas of strength and weaknesses.
- Performance management framework
 - Ensuring a good grip on compliance and quality.
- HR and staff development
 - Understanding the workforce and development needs.
- Finance
 - Being confident about transferring budgets.



New Ways of Thinking

- Leadership is not a neutral position.
- Partnership working – leading beyond authority.
- Engaging with staff and service users.
- Managing the commissioner and provider relationship.
- Developing new and innovative ways of working.
- Creating the conditions within which good social work can flourish.



Continuous Improvement Journey

BASELINING: size, shape, activity, gaps

*STANDARDS: set expectation and
routinely measure/challenge*

*COMPLIANCE: team & worker focus,
proactive reporting. Ensure data quality*

*QUALITY & IMPACT: link KPIs with
learning from audit, voice, deep dives*





Maturity Model

Initial

- Ad hoc data requests
- Few standards
- Little ownership

Developing

- Value of data recognised
- Performance Team recognised
- Strategy in place
- Data Quality important

Defined

- Strategy embedded
- Technical environment
- Ownership of performance
- Routine data quality activity

Performing

- Holistic approach to performance management
- Integrated datasets
- Deeper dive analyses
- Continuous Improvement Feedback

Optimised

- Automation
- Organisation aligned to data strategy and standards
- Focus on fine tuning Continuous Improvement
- Outcome focussed



The foundations to support change

The core foundations of achieving improvement can be summarised as:

- Workforce stability
- Investment in the workforce
- A focus on social care
- Embedding a new philosophy of practice
- Using innovation for transformation
- Customer engagement
- Openness to external scrutiny
- System leadership and strengthened partnership working





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Leadership for us means...

excellence

motivation

leadership

heart

passion

dedication

drive

quality



achieving
for children

Nick Whitfield – Chief Executive

Public Sector Ethos

- Putting children and young people first and making sure their voices are heard
- Working collaboratively with public stakeholders and partners to deliver better outcomes
- Embracing inclusion and diversity so that the needs of all are met
- Decisions based on understood needs of children



Private Sector Discipline

- Unleashing the entrepreneurial spirit
- Cutting down on bureaucracy and being fleet of foot
- Efficiency and being unafraid to do more to re-invest in the front line



Grounded in democratic accountability

- Service to local people and those elected to represent them
- Services commissioned to meet the needs of a local population
- Willing to argue our case but always ready to listen and base our decisions on evidence
- Understand the need to work for both local and central government





achieving for children

Champions for children and families



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Improving Children's Services on the Isle of Wight

Steve Crocker

Director of Children's Services,

Hampshire County Council, Isle of Wight Council

Context

- Ofsted failure – bad inadequate
- Schools failure
- Financial pressures
- Political turmoil
- Corporate culture
- An island...
- Asked by DfE, Sector Led Improvement agency and finally the IOW Council

Due Diligence

Can we help?

- Humility/arrogance
- What is the delivery model?
 - Trust? Contract? Partnership?

Why?

- What do the corporate governance arrangements look like?
- No cost to Hampshire

Due Diligence

Benefits?

- Establish the parameters – for us a partnership agreement under direction to insulate from the politics (but you can't)
- Whole system – defined by 2004 Act as services scattered
- Separate budget, separate political accountabilities, two LAs not one

1st Phase - Look and Listen

- Painful and high risk
- Attune to the culture – in this case toxic but can also be denial or acceptance
- What are the stories? – ‘things are different here’
- Allies v not allies
- Chaos and confusion
- Systems, processes, hierarchies – what is there?
- Who could you play into this – you won’t do it alone?

Phase 2 - Decide and Change

- Probably only one shot at this
- Communicate what you are going to do
- What can be lifted and shifted from elsewhere or from the past
- What has worked
- What might work

Phase 2 - Decide and Change

- Hierarchy and spans of control
- Efficiencies are ok – eg fostering
- Challenging corporate culture
- Challenge workforce culture
- Work with ever changing politics
- Management grip (...yes Clare)

Phase 3 - Implement and manage

- IT
- HR
- Finance
- Basics in place
- Compliance – a decision is not the basis for negotiation
- Communicate what you've done

Phase 3 - Implement and manage

- Performance management framework
- Quality Assurance – at this stage it's more important that you have it, than the detail of what it is
- Talk to partners – bring them closer
- It won't be perfect but it will get you so far

Phase 4 - Incremental improvement

- The framework must allow people to breathe
- Be flexible but not too flexible
- Adapt PMF and QA
- Allow more autonomy
- Promote your stars
- Communicate how well you're doing
- Political impatience (understandable)
- Partnership conversations take a different turn

Phase 5 - Hard graft

- Still not there
- Keep the energy up
- Peer review?
- Innovations where safe?
- QA and PMF settled
- Corporate culture changed (to a degree)

Reflections

- Moral purpose outweighed good sense
- Geography
- Partnership trumps trusts – so far
- Emotional intelligence the key leadership quality – but not too much
- Not seeking heroism but some had it thrust upon them – Steve Handforth, Steph How, Stuart Ashley, Kathy Marriott, Kim Goode
- Don't forget the schools
- Practice to theory (ie we winged it)

The three phases

Poor-to-fair

1. Getting the basics right – driven by leadership
2. Building the ethos and culture – & engaging the workforce

Fair-to-good

1. Capacity for robust self-assessment, vigilance
2. Locus of leadership shifts and becomes more broad
3. From “mission-critical” aspects to whole-service view

Good-to-great

1. Improvement no longer a discrete project – it is the norm
2. Disciplined innovation embedded within delivery
3. Openness to others – challenge & system leadership role



Two years from the frank recognition and acceptance of the service's weaknesses to running a safe, effective core service



All the while engaging the workforce and working with partners

Three years to develop a safe, effective core service into a consistently high-quality, innovative service







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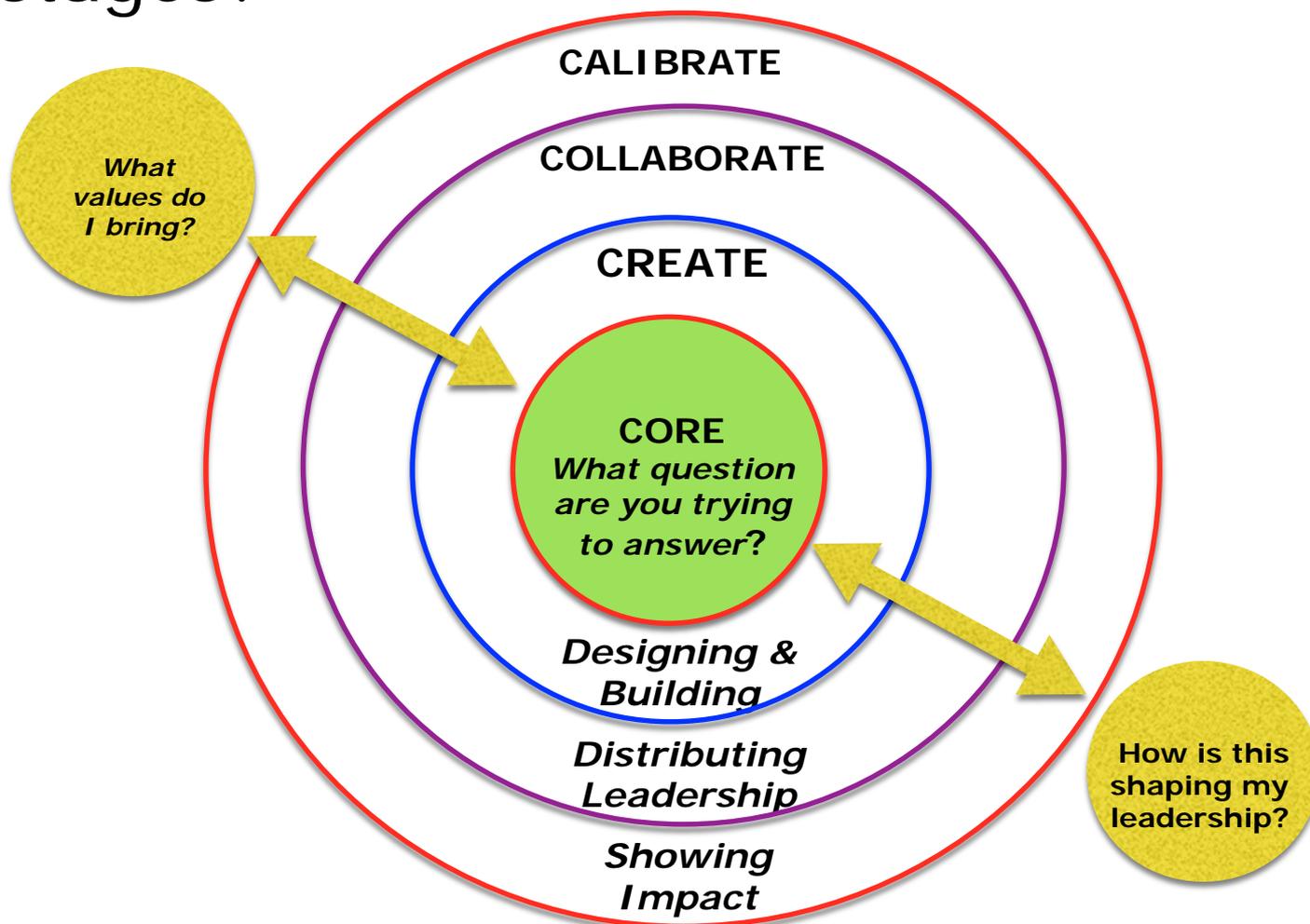
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What do leaders need a) *around them* b) *within them* to operate successfully at each of the three stages?



Feedback and questions

