



# Contemporary Trends and Leadership Challenges in Local Government

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[www.goodlocalgovernment.org](http://www.goodlocalgovernment.org)

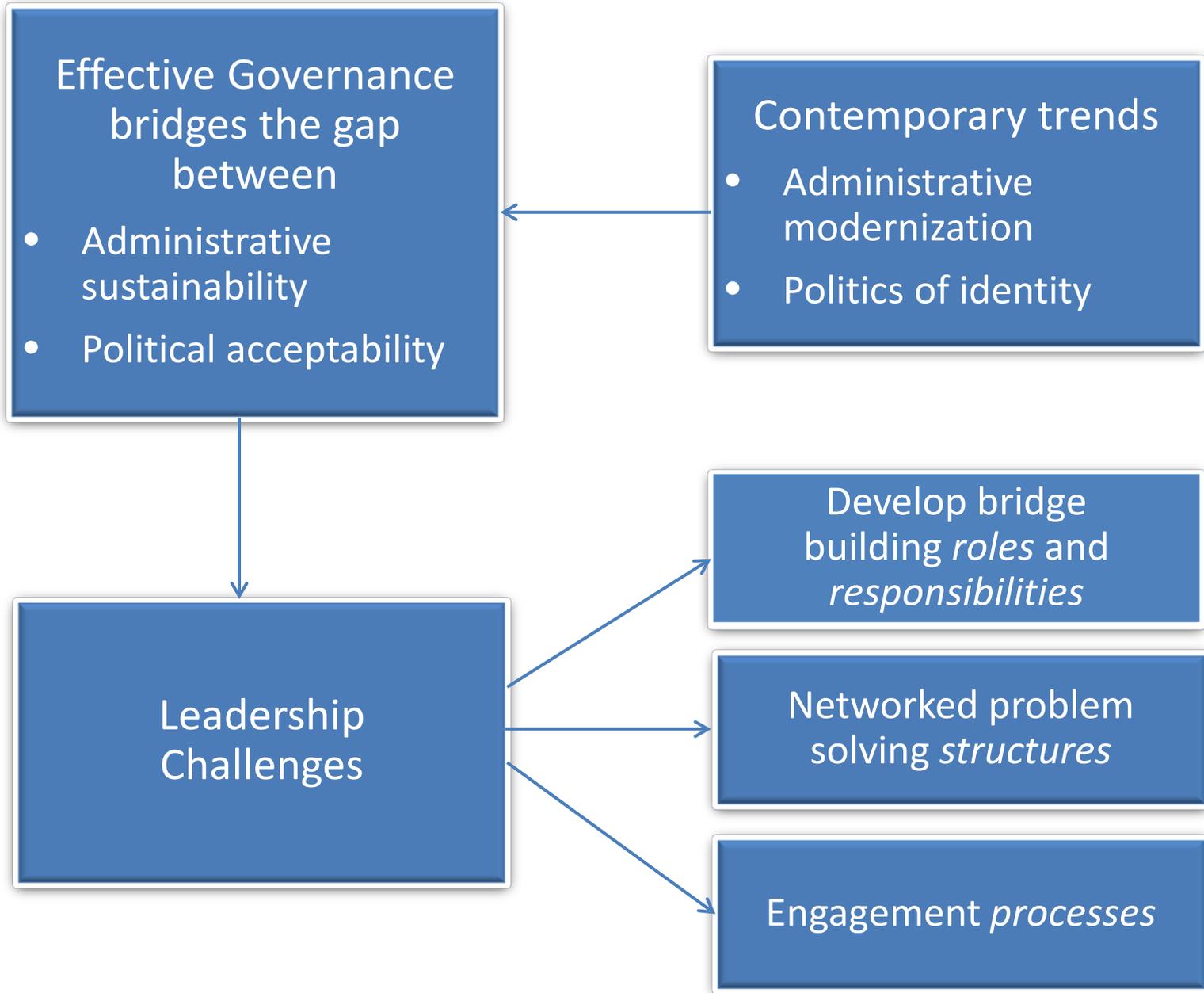
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# Goals

- Describe fundamental prerequisite for effective governance—connecting political acceptability with administrative sustainability
- Introduce two contemporary trends that widen the gap
- Describe the leadership challenges associated with bridging the gap
- Identify attitude/mindset to deal with the challenges





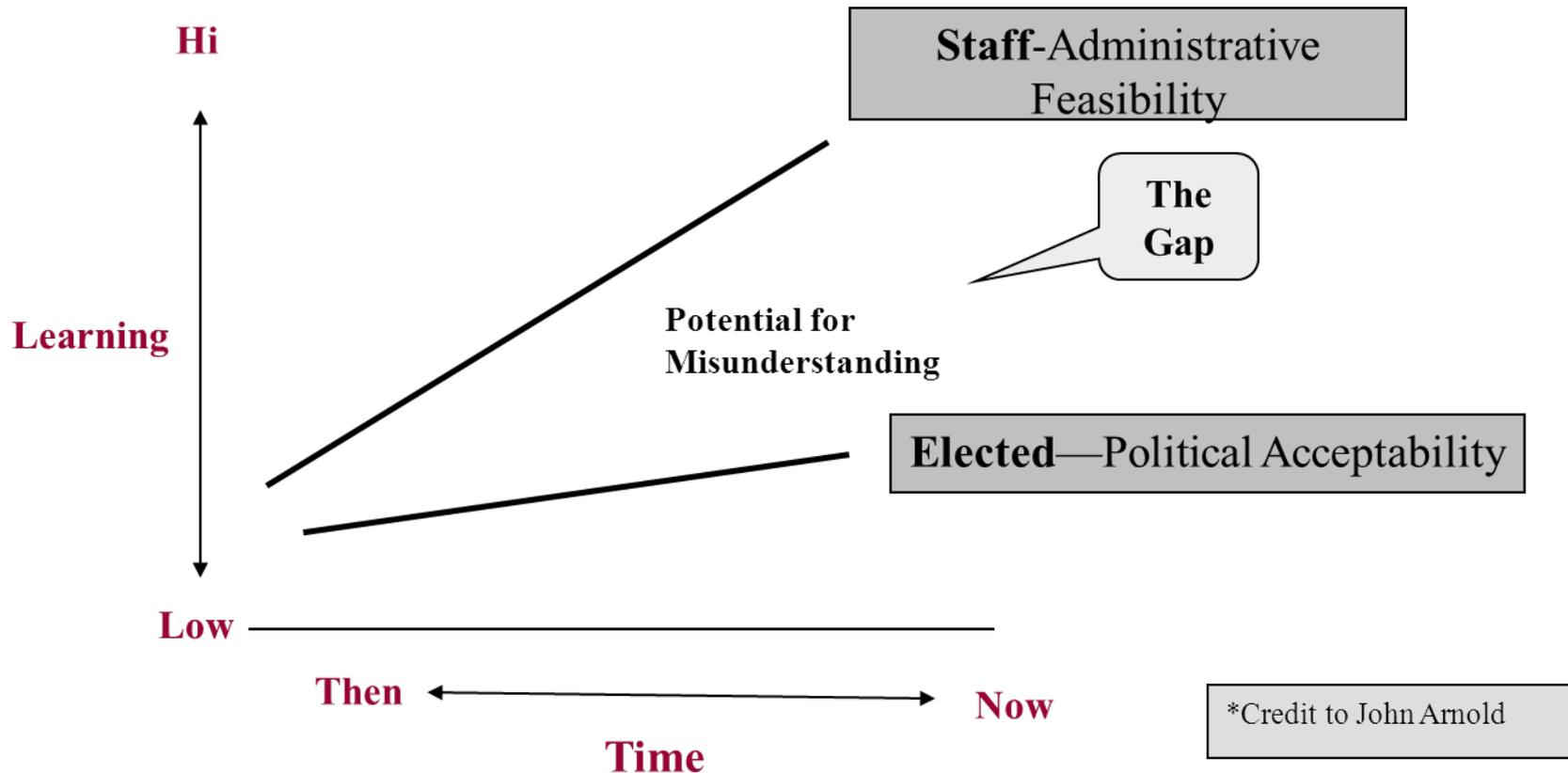
# Examples of the Gap between “Administrative Sustainability” and “Political Acceptability”

- Post Office closings
- Fiscal Cliff
- Belle Isle, Detroit
- Your examples

What are the consequences of failing to bridge the gap?



# Gap between Political Acceptability and Administrative Sustainability\*



# Building Political Acceptability

- Do we agree on the problem to be solved, its importance, and our goals?
- Do we agree on the scope of the problem and important dimensions of the problem?
- What are the philosophical/ideological differences that will affect the discussion?
- Do we agree on who should be at the table, who we will listen to and who our audience is?



# Building Administrative Sustainability

- Do we understand and agree among admin staff on the problem to be solved?
- Do the solutions proposed reflect professional norms and technical expertise
- Will proposed solutions solve the problem?
- Will the solutions be affordable and sustainable?



# Contemporary Trends

- Administrative modernization
- Desire to create, maintain, and preserve sense of community/identity—"Honor the past; capture the present; shape the future!" \*

\*Mission statement of KU Libraries



# Your Experiences

- Modernization: Compared to the past, how are you making decisions based on hard data today that is systematically available? What data bases exist today electronically that were not available electronically in the past?
- Identity: How are issues of identity expressed in your community (e.g. land-use; neighborhoods concerns; east v. west; branding)? How have you seen the importance of tribe, family, religion worldwide?



# Indicators of Modernizing the Organization

- Connecting administrative processes to strategic goals
- Integrating personnel and financial systems
- Organizing around problems, not departments and hierarchy—e.g. reducing gang violence
- Decentralized decision making for timely response, but centralized tools
- Market orientation including privatization; citizen as customer
- GIS/GPS activities and Internet-based innovations
- Results-based & quality-based performance measurement and bench marking
- Goal-based performance appraisal
- Performance budgeting
- Change in expectations re: time

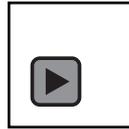


# Two Features of Modernization

- Hard data drive out soft data (experience, intuition) when efficiency and quality are improved. Examples: casinos, actuarial projections; assessing property values
- Modernization means centralization, standardization, consistency, high quality, and familiarity. Example: McDonald's; airports (If I did not know where I was, could I tell from the inside of the airport?)



Surrender “to the world of your Blackberry” --  
Lasgo



# Wal-Mart

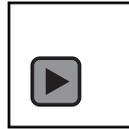


# Indicators of Desire for Identity/Community

- Emphasis on branding
- Focus on us/them: passion in community/neighborhood/identity issues—NIMBY (Gardner intermodal)
- More emphasis on neighborhoods as the base unit of the community (de facto governments) e.g. HOAs
- Emphasis on preservation of the past
- The past viewed idyllic/wistful/nostalgic
- Engaging citizens in administrative processes—phone apps for pothole repair; participatory budgeting exercises
- More avenues for opinions/feedback
- More accountability and transparency with citizens
- More communication, contact, and educational opportunities



# Somewhere Over the Rainbow— Israel Kamakawiwo'ole



# The Challenge

- How do we use the techniques of modernization to build unique communities of character?
- How do we connect the worlds symbolized in the two songs: Surrender and Rainbow?
  - Is it as simple as putting a façade on Walmart?



# Communities of Character

- Economically and socially vibrant and connected to its neighbors
- Citizen trust and confidence that jurisdiction can deal effectively with public problems
- Assist citizens retain control and build identity
- Value spontaneity yet foster tradition
- Encourage generosity and diversity
- Embody and add to the greater good



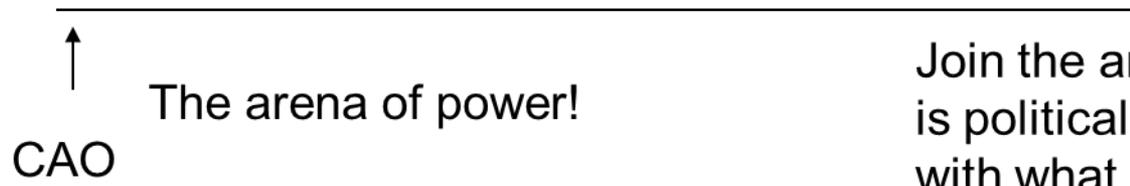
# Challenge 1 – Administrative Challenge in Roles and Responsibilities

- How to create and reinforce “bridge building” administrative roles and problem oriented approaches  
...without becoming politically aligned or administratively compromised.



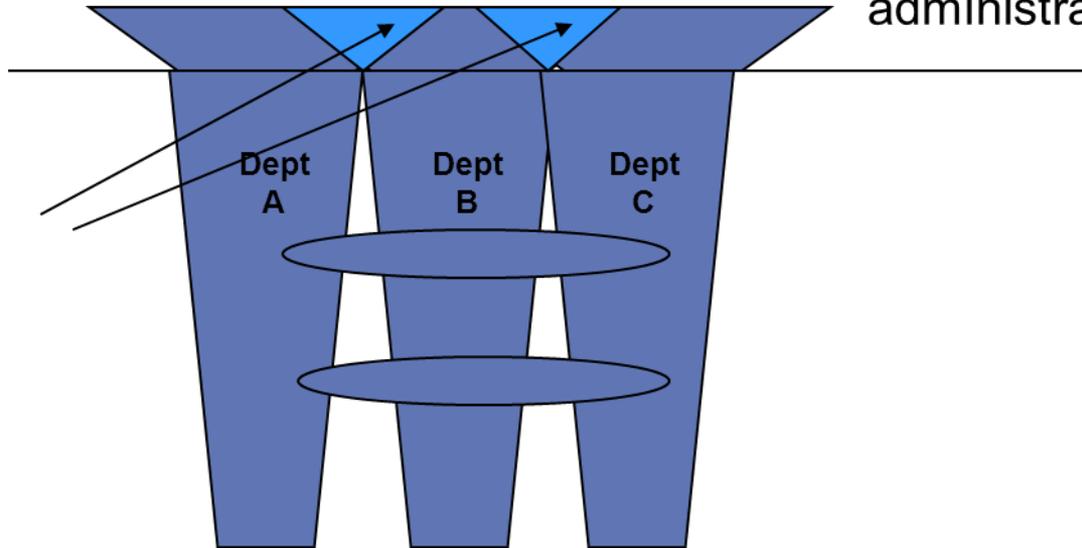
# Working in the Gap

Politics



Join the arenas of what is politically acceptable with what is administratively feasible

Administration



Interdepartmental policy arenas



# Discussion Questions for Working in the Gap

- Are some department heads more skilled than others at working the gap?
- What are the administrative skills/mindset/attitude that separate them from others?
- (No use of “communication” or one word lists)



# Issues Related to the Structural Challenge

- Realization that problems extend beyond established boundaries contributing to the gap
- As the gap increases, other entities are invited and invite themselves into the gap:
  - Third parties emerge as players
    - Non profits, associations, clubs (rotary), foundations (each claims a space in the gap)
  - Shared services between jurisdictions
  - Regional authorities emerge
  - Cross sector partnerships, contracting out, privatization



# Structural Challenge

How to synchronize government jurisdiction and third party players with problems to be solved

Leadership/management considerations:

- Existing boundaries come into question
- Imperative for collaborative relationships and skills
- Managing in networks as well as hierarchy
- Managing boundaries (silos) becomes a new concept
- Minneapolis/St. Paul example; [OneBayArea](#) example



# Issues Related to Process Challenge

- Creates possibilities for comprehensive approaches (e.g. land-use, transportation, eco-devo, environment)
- More avenues for political expression emerge
- Lack of hierarchy creates Imperative for planned engagement ([www.iap2.org](http://www.iap2.org)) look for the “spectrum”
  - Information sharing
  - Consultation
  - Empowerment (show psych contract)



# Process Challenge

- A. How to incorporate engagement (planned and spontaneous, including social media) into traditional government structures and processes to promote deliberation and consideration of range of public values
- Private sector is profit driven
  - Non-profit sector is mission driven
  - Public Sector is values driven
- B. How to embrace internal organizational networks while respecting traditional lines of authority.



# Summary Challenges

- A. Roles and Responsibilities: Administrative staff moving into the gap (without political alignment or administrative compromise)
- B. Structures: Developing skills/mindset where the problems to be solved drive pol/admin work and jurisdictional and/or departmental boundaries adjust
- C. Processes: Imperative for engagement as a decision making approach
  - A. Citizens
  - B. Networks (including within the org)



# Questions

1. Which of the challenges is most relevant to you?
2. Which skills that you identified are you best positioned to enhance or develop?
3. Which are you least prepared for?
4. What is one step you can take to prepare yourself/meet the leadership challenges?

