Ideas on leadership: University Ghent

Complex adaptive leadership

Bob Mash
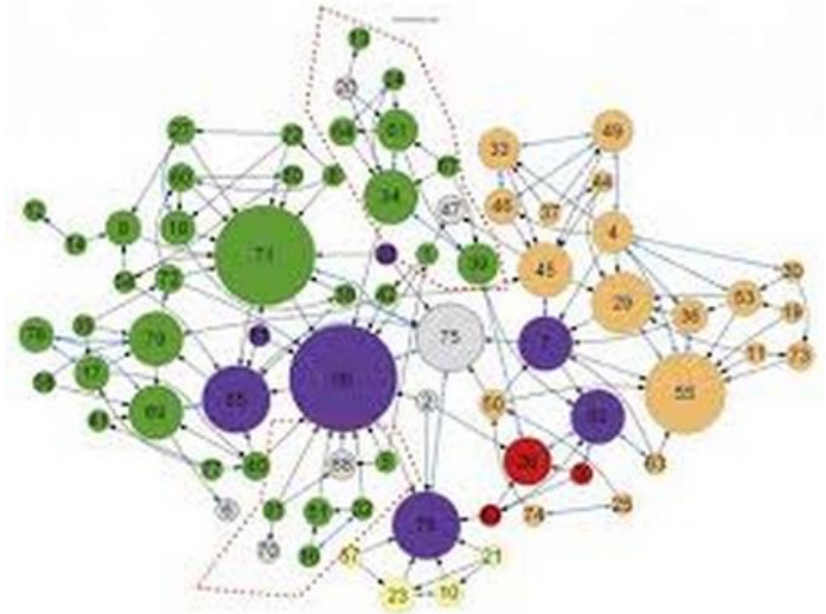
Stellenbosch University

How do we imagine the organisation that we try to lead?

Oligarchic assumption
People and departments in hierarchy, defined by lines of authority and reporting, metaphor of machine

Polyarchic realities
People and departments in network, defined by relationships and communication connectivity, metaphor of living system

What are the key characteristics of a complex living system?

- Self-organisation
  - Open feedback loops (blur cause and effect)
  - Dynamic flows (constantly changing)
- Inter-relatedness (networks not hierarchy)
- Adaptive (to outside and on inside)
- Emergence (allows new ideas and structures to emerge)

Leading complexity
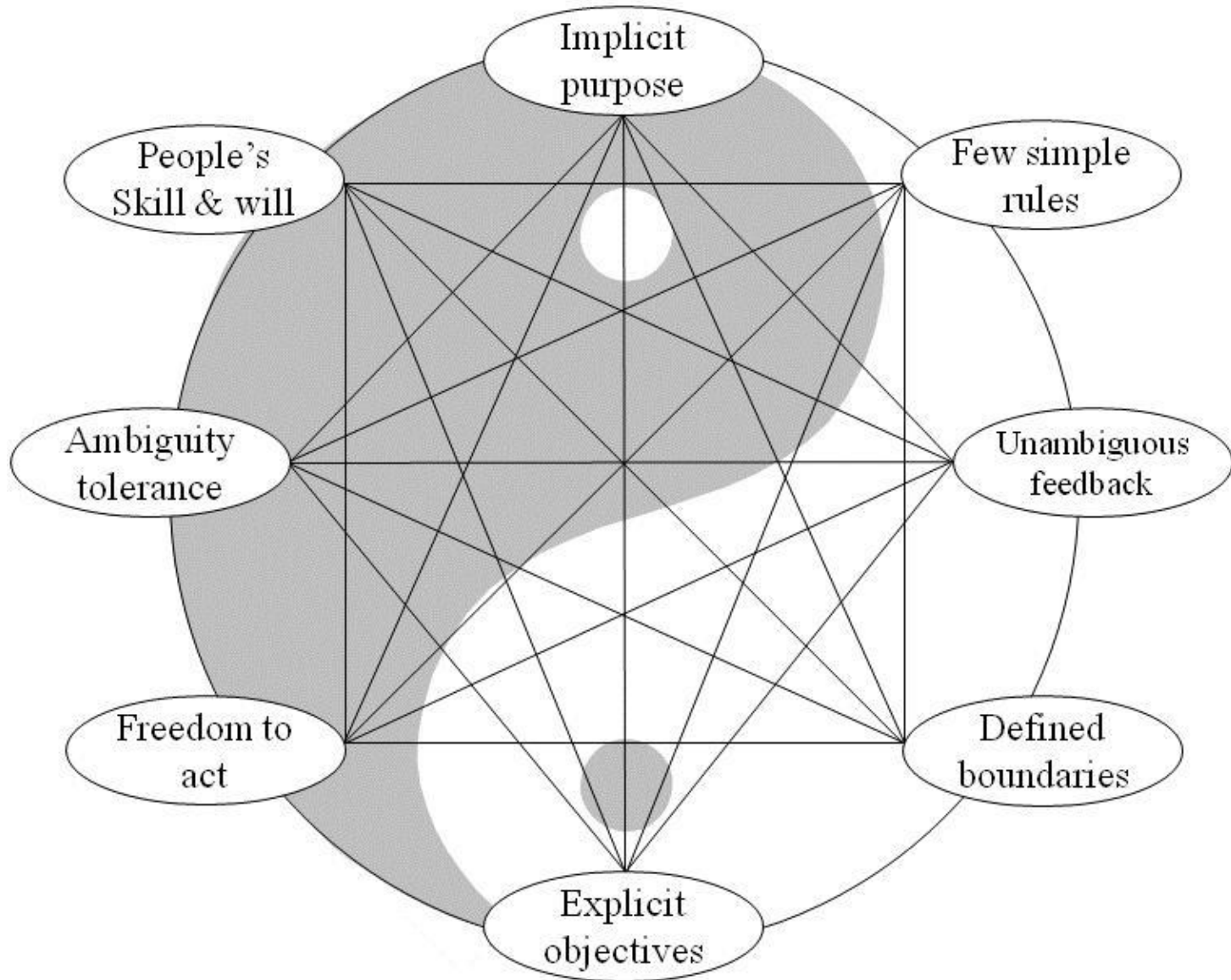
Leadership and management

Leadership

- Vision
- Strategy
- Long term
- Empowerment
- Coaching
- Big picture
- Direction

Management

- Budget
- Tactics
- Short term
- Control
- Telling
- Details
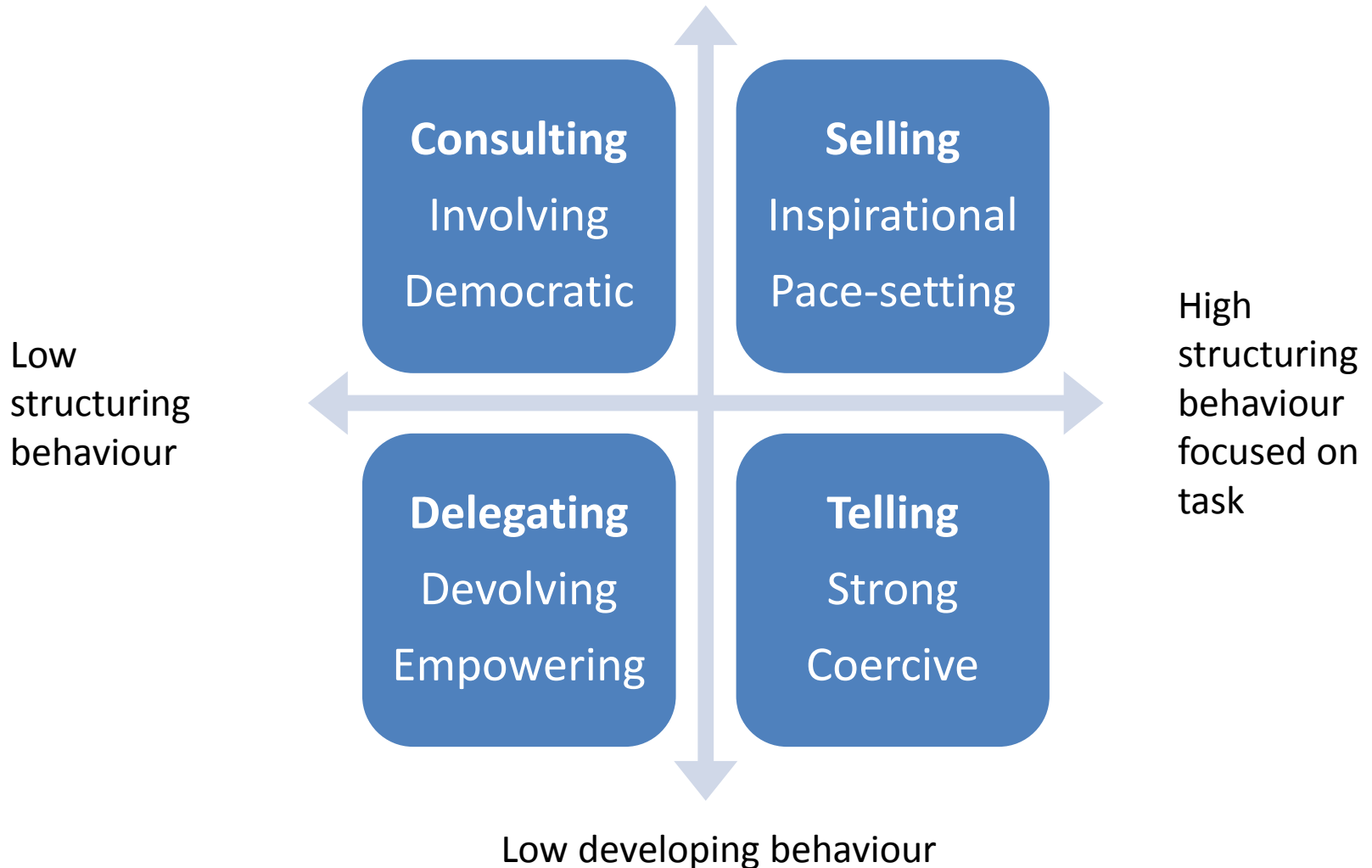- Execution

Leadership

People's needs

- Vision
- Strategy
- Long term
- Empowerment
- Coaching
- Big picture
- Direction

Goal's needs

- Budget
- Tactics
- Short term
- Control
- Telling
- Details
- Execution

Situational leadership

High developing behaviour
focused on people

Consulting

Involving

Democratic

Selling

Inspirational

Pace-setting

Low
structuring
behaviour

High
structuring
behaviour
focused on
task

Delegating

Devolving

Empowering

Telling

Strong

Coercive

Low developing behaviour

Oligarchic leaders

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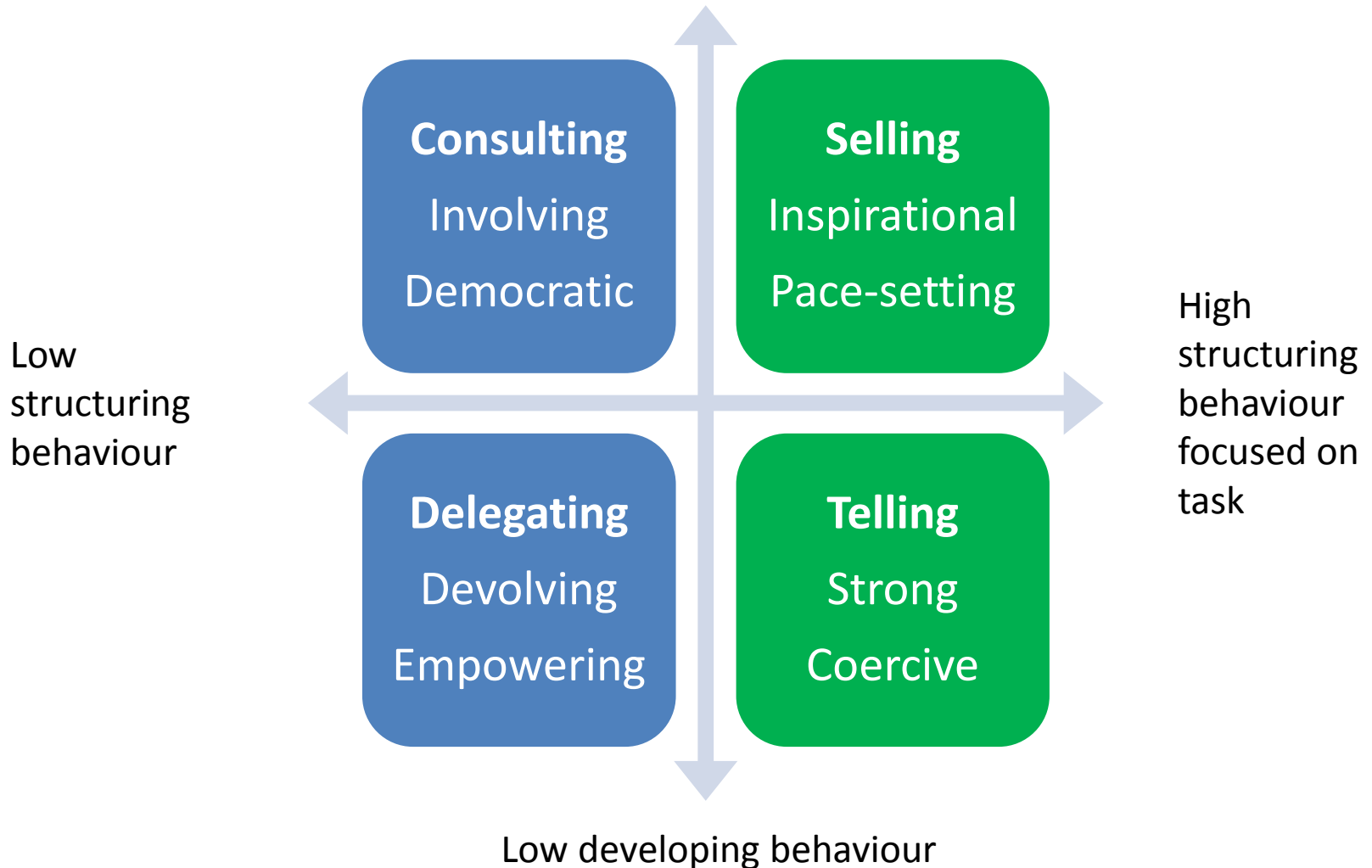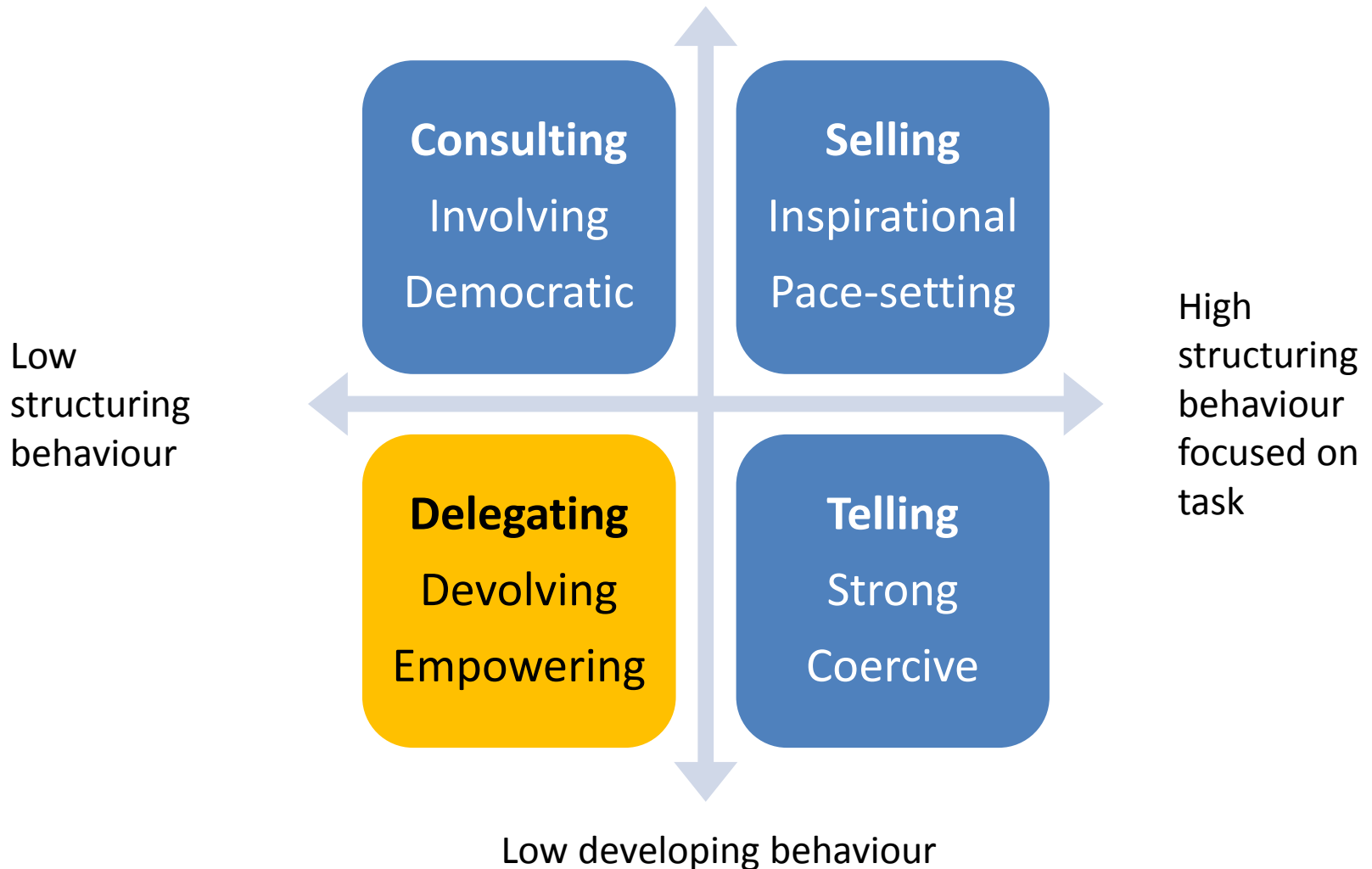
Low developing behaviour

Levels of followership

1. Wait to be told
2. Ask to be told
3. Seek approval for an idea or plan
4. Seek approval for action done
5. Get on and inform as a routine

"Leaders get the followers they deserve"

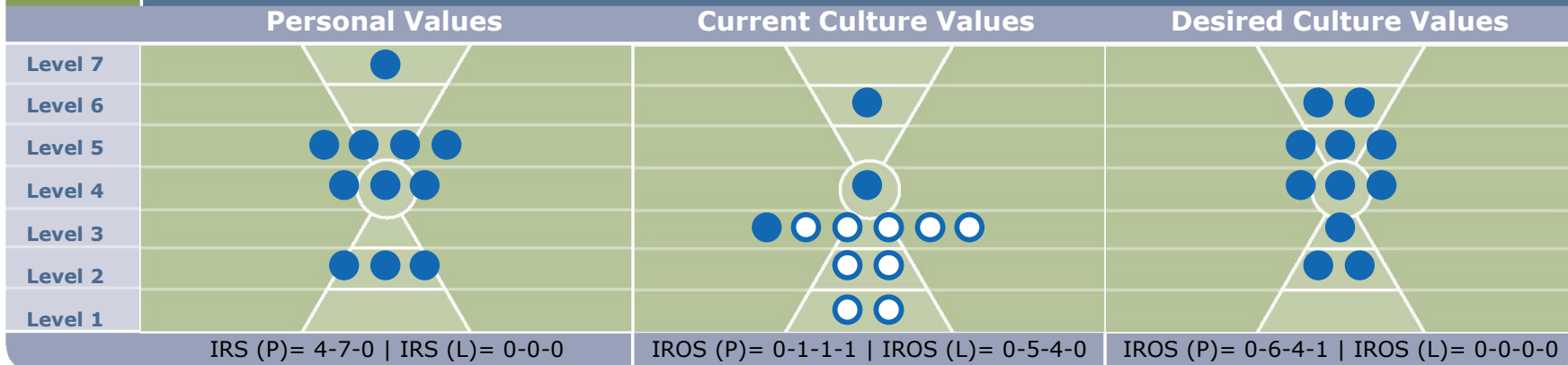# Further reading….

- Complex adaptive leadership: Embracing paradox and uncertainty
- Nick Obolensky
- Gower Applied Business Research
- 2010

How well are we doing? Department of Health (154)

Personal Values	Current Culture Values	Desired Culture Values

IRS (P)= 4-7-0 | IRS (L)= 0-0-0	IROS (P)= 0-1-1-1 | IROS (L)= 0-5-4-0	IROS (P)= 0-6-4-1 | IROS (L)= 0-0-0-0

Matches

PV - CC   0
CC - DC   2
PV - DC   2

Health Index (PL)

PV: 11-0
CC: 3-9
DC: 11-0

Personal Values

1. caring — 73 — 2(R)
2. honesty — 68 — 5(I)
3. commitment — 67 — 5(I)
4. respect — 67 — 2(R)
5. **accountability** — 65 — 4(R)
6. compassion — 45 — 7(R)
7. responsibility — 43 — 4(I)
8. balance (home/work) — 38 — 4(I)
9. trust — 35 — 5(R)
10. **fairness** — 33 — 5(R)
11. listening — 33 — 2(R)

Current Culture Values

1. not sharing information (L) — 49 — 3(R)
2. cost reduction (L) — 48 — 1(O)
3. *community involvement* — 45 — 6(S)
4. confusion (L) — 43 — 3(O)
5. control (L) — 36 — 1(R)
6. manipulation (L) — 35 — 2(R)
7. blame (L) — 34 — 2(R)
8. power (L) — 34 — 3(R)
9. results orientation — 32 — 3(O)
10. hierarchy (L) — 31 — 3(O)
11. long hours (L) — 31 — 3(O)
12. *teamwork* — 31 — 4(R)

Desired Culture Values

1. transparency — 46 — 5(R)
2. **accountability** — 45 — 4(R)
3. shared decision-making — 43 — 4(R)
4. *teamwork* — 41 — 4(R)
5. *community involvement* — 40 — 6(S)
6. patient satisfaction — 37 — 2(O)
7. leadership development — 34 — 6(O)
8. staff recognition — 34 — 2(R)
9. professionalism — 33 — 3(O)
10. **fairness** — 32 — 5(R)
11. staff engagement — 32 — 5(O)

Leading complexity

- Enable the key characteristics to function well:
  - Ensure information is shared in all directions well
  - Build connectivity and good relationships (internal)
  - Facilitate good stakeholder engagement (external)
  - Encourage learning, experimentation, innovation
  - Allow solutions to emerge from the bottom and not just from the top
  - Create the right organisational culture and processes
  - Leader is part of the team / network not above it

How well are we doing? Department of Health (154)

Personal Values	Current Culture Values	Desired Culture Values

Levels 1–7 plotted on each chart.

	Personal Values	Current Culture Values	Desired Culture Values
IRS	IRS (P)= 4-7-0 | IRS (L)= 0-0-0	IROS (P)= 0-1-1-1 | IROS (L)= 0-5-4-0	IROS (P)= 0-6-4-1 | IROS (L)= 0-0-0-0

Matches

PV - CC 0
CC - DC 2
PV - DC 2

Health Index (PL)

PV: 11-0
CC: 3-9
DC: 11-0

Personal Values

#	Value		
1.	caring	73	2(R)
2.	honesty	68	5(I)
3.	commitment	67	5(I)
4.	respect	67	2(R)
5.	**accountability**	65	4(R)
6.	compassion	45	7(R)
7.	responsibility	43	4(I)
8.	balance (home/work)	38	4(I)
9.	trust	35	5(R)
10.	**fairness**	33	5(R)
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Current Culture Values

#	Value		
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10.	hierarchy (L)	31	3(O)
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Desired Culture Values

#	Value		
1.	transparency	46	5(R)
2.	**accountability**	45	4(R)
3.	shared decision-making	43	4(R)
4.	*teamwork*	41	4(R)
5.	*community involvement*	40	6(S)
6.	patient satisfaction	37	2(O)
7.	leadership development	34	6(O)
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10.	**fairness**	32	5(R)
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Black Underline = PV & CC   *Orange* = CC & DC

Organizational

Orange = PV, CC & DC   **Blue** = PV & DC

Societal

Values Plot

P = Positive   L = Potentially Limiting   (white circle)

I = Individual   O = Organizational

R = Relationship   S = Societal

December 2011