

THE ART OF POSSIBILITY



A NEW APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP

Concepts developed from:

Groh Productions, Inc. Training Leader's Guide
Leadership: An Art of Possibility
2000

Groh Production Video
Leadership: An Art of Possibility
with Ben Zander and Roz Zander

Presented by:





Our Objectives

- Explore ways of “lifting off from the world of struggle” and instead soar into a “vast universe of possibility”
- Find new frameworks of assumptions to allow possibilities to present themselves
- Practice!



Agenda

1. Views of Leadership
2. Video
3. Avoiding Downward Spirals
4. Rule Number Six
5. Shining Eyes
6. Give Away “A”s
7. Wrap-up/Adjourn



Beliefs About Leaders



Introducing

Ben and Rosamond Zander



Video Debrief

- Why do Roz and Ben say that leadership is an art of possibility?

- Why does the music metaphor work to help us understand a new way of being?



The Downward Spiral



Characteristics

- Attention is riveted on the barriers
- Talk is about walls, roadblocks, and reasons why things won't work
- Thinking is resigned and possibilities are excluded



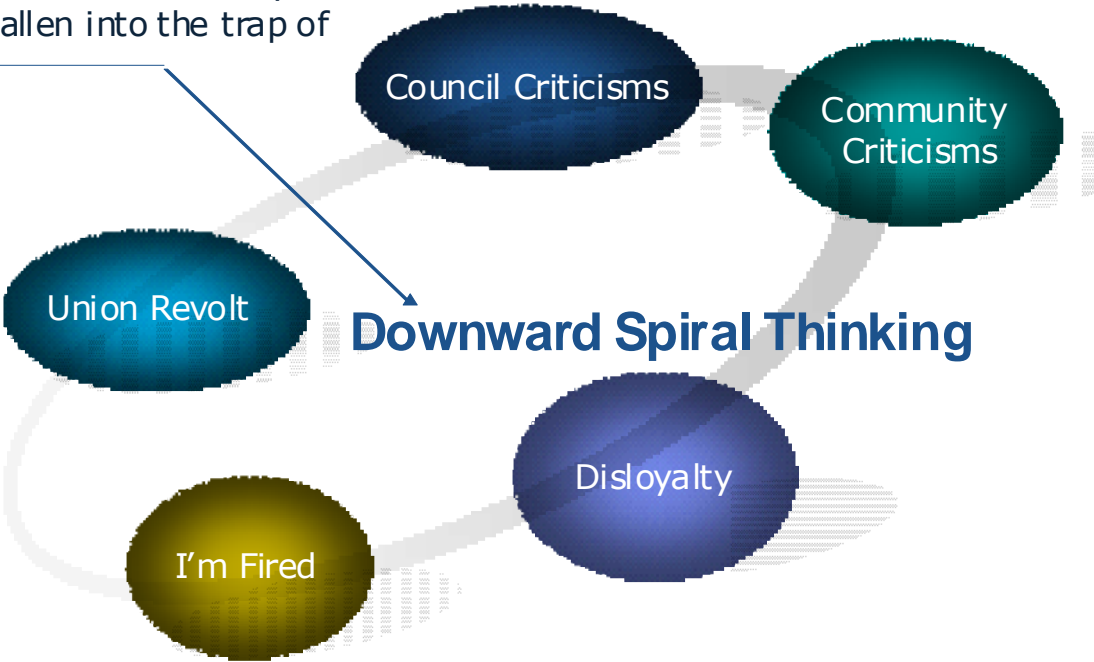
The Downward Spiral

- What downward spiral conversations have you participated in?

- What conversations do you overhear in the hallway at your City Hall?

The Downward Spiral

Describe a time where you have fallen into the trap of





Steps to Frame Possibility

1. Make a new distinction in the realm of possibility: one that is a powerful substitute for the current framework that is generating the downward spiral.
2. Enter the territory. Embody the new distinction in such a way that it becomes the framework for life around you.
3. Keep distinguishing what is “on the track” and what is “off the track” of your framework for possibility.



Practice

- “Have the courage and persistence to distinguish the *downward spiral* from the radiant realm of possibility in the face of any challenge”
- Think about the downward spiral conversation you had. What was the challenge? What were the possibilities?

Challenge	Possibilities



Rule Number Six



Rule Number Six

- In what way is your job like a conductor's?

- When was the last time you took yourself too seriously? What happened?

- If you were going through that same situation now, what would you do differently?



Input and Rule Number Six

- How does Ben remind himself about Rule Number Six?

- How does a white sheet of paper enroll Ben's musicians in the vision?

- What would that look like in your organization?



Practice

- How can you remind yourself about Rule Number Six?

- What method or sign will you use?



Shining Eyes



Shining Eyes

The practice of leadership has to do with relating to people in a new way. It means:

- Helping them create possibility for themselves

- Helping them bring all of themselves into the game.

It means paying attention to people differently.

- How are people receiving what you have to say?

- Are their eyes shining, or are they merely doing their job in an acceptable way?

- Is your presence enlivening others or shutting them down?



Shining Eyes: Enrollment

- Igniting Force = Passion

- Enrollment is not about forcing, cajoling, tricking, bargaining, pressuring or guilt-tripping someone into doing something your way

- Enrollment is the art and practice of generating a spark of possibility for others to share



Practice

How do I shut people down?	How could I create shining eyes in my organization?



Be the Leader You Would Like to Follow

- What is the name people call you when you are not there?

- Do you like it? Why/why not?

- Do you need to modify any behaviors to change your nickname?



Give 'em an "A"



Our Assumptions

- It seems that when we encounter differences, we either get curious about those differences and seek to understand and value them, or we fall into the dynamic of assuming CNI.
- Conscious – The person is aware of the behavior.
- Negative – The motivation behind the behavior is negative, i.e. stupidity, lack of manners or education, etc.
- Intent – The person is choosing this behavior over another.



This assumption leads us to label behaviors

. . . and one another !!!

**Check your assumptions at the door –
Give ‘em an “A”!**



Giving Away “A”s

- Recognize a universal desire in people to contribute to others
-
-

- Provide a way for people to make an authentic contribution
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-

- Suspend judgment
-
-

- “It is only to a person to whom you have granted an A that you will really listen, and it is in that rare instance when you have ears for another person that you can truly appreciate a fresh point of view.”
-
-



Clearing Communication Lines

Certain attitudes and behaviors are essential to clearing communication lines.

Attitudes

- I assume good faith: I do not question your sincerity or sanity.
- I care about our relationship and want to resolve this difference in perception. Please help me see it from your point of view.
- I am open to influence and am prepared to change.

Behaviors

- Listen to understand.
- Speak to be understood.
- Start dialog from a common point of reference or point of agreement, and move slowly into areas of disagreement.

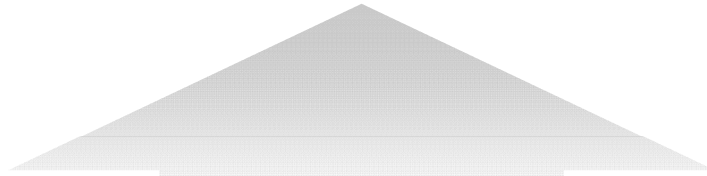
“When these three attitudes and behaviors are acquired, almost any perception or credibility problem can be solved.”

Stephen R. Covey, Principle-Centered Leadership, p. 110



Giving Away "A"s

Everyone Gets an "A"





Everyone Gets an “A”

Dear Julia,

Next year is going to be a great year for me (or me and my Council/Organization/Family) because . . .

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Remember

- Leadership is about “sounding together”
- Leadership is about transforming oneself into a new way of being
- Rule Number Six
- Enroll people in your vision
- A downward spiral is a conversation of no possibility
- Power comes from making other people powerful
- Give yourself – and others – an A so that they have a possibility to live into, not an expectation to live up to



Thank You!

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About the Presenter:

Julia D. Novak, President

Julia established The Novak Consulting Group in September 2009 when she acquired Public Management Partners. From 2003 to 2009, she served as the regional Vice President of a national consulting firm. Julia has more than 20 years of executive leadership and consulting experience. She is a consultant, trainer and facilitator who has worked with numerous local governments, non-profit organizations and community groups. During her local government career, she worked in Fort Collins, Colorado; Lexington, Massachusetts; Rockville, Maryland; and was city manager of Rye, New York.

Julia has extensive experience as a facilitator and trainer. She has worked with elected official and appointed officials across the country to conduct goal setting, develop strategic plans and prioritize service delivery. She has conducted training for elected officials as an individual trainer and through the National League of Cities and a consortium of cities in California. Topics included leadership style and evaluating appointed officials.

Julia has also established herself as a thought leader in the area of governance and administration. In April 2002, Julia was one of 20 practitioners who participated in the International City/County Management Association (ICMA)-sponsored symposium on the future of local government administration. Her response to Dr. James Svava's paper, "City Council, Roles, Performance, and the Form of Government," is included in the ICMA-published book, "The Future of Local Government Administration." In 2009, she co-authored an article with Dr. John Nalbandian for publication in *Public Management Magazine* called "Preparing Councils for Their Work." Julia is passionate about the importance of sound management in leading organizations and in 2010, she co-authored the cover story of *Public Management Magazine* with entitled "Give Yourself Permission to Manage."

Julia has been a speaker at national conferences for the ICMA, National League of Cities and American Society of Public Administrators. She has been a featured speaker/trainer for many state associations, including Ohio, Vermont, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, the Metropolitan (D.C.) Association of Local Government Administrators and the Illinois Assistant Municipal Managers Association. She has taught strategic planning, project management, policy advocacy and implementation internationally as part of a USAID Initiative to develop a "civil society" in Iraq, and has developed core competency training modules for use in China.

Julia earned a bachelor's degree in government and politics from George Mason University and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas. Julia was in the first class of individuals certified by ICMA as Credentialed Local Government Managers and maintains that designation. She is a Master Facilitator of the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator, and is certified to administer several level-B psychological assessments, including the Apter Motivational Styles Profile and the Strength Deployment Inventory. She also is trained in popular level-A assessments, including the Thomas-Killman Conflict Modes Inventory and the Human Element-B.