

HOW LEADERS CAN SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE CHANGE IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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INTRODUCTION

In traditional institutions of higher education, presidents can't snap their fingers to move the college or university in a particular direction. Shared governance—the processes through which faculty, the administration, and even students and staff participate in creating the policies and charting a direction for an institution—is a major tenet of higher education.

How to get cooperation and agreement to move an institution forward is one of the trickiest parts of the leader's job. Yet moving forward must be a priority as higher education copes with the emergence of technology-enabled learning solutions while maintaining an increasingly expensive traditional educational model. Add to this environment a number of stressors—from the challenges of educating during the pandemic, to shrinking numbers of high school graduates, to turbulent debates over what schools can and can't teach and what faculty can and can't say—and it's imperative to chart strategic paths forward rather than stay put or drift. There's arguably never been a more difficult time to be a leader of a higher education institution. The average tenure of a college president has consistently and steadily declined over the last couple of decades. It's no longer unusual to see presidential tenures end after three to five years.

Against this backdrop, a theory from our research on innovation can help leaders. It's a theory about what tools to use when there are varying levels of agreement within an organization. Used as a lens to better understand causal mechanisms, the theory reveals that not all the tools available to leaders work in all circumstances. To successfully chart a course forward, leaders need to understand the level of agreement inside their college or university and then use the right tools to forge ahead.



UNDERSTANDING THE LEVEL OF AGREEMENT: TOOLS OF COOPERATION

Once a college or university leader has clarity around what they want to change, they still need to convince the individuals who play a role and have a say in the change—even if the leader has designed and tested the change with significant parts of the community.

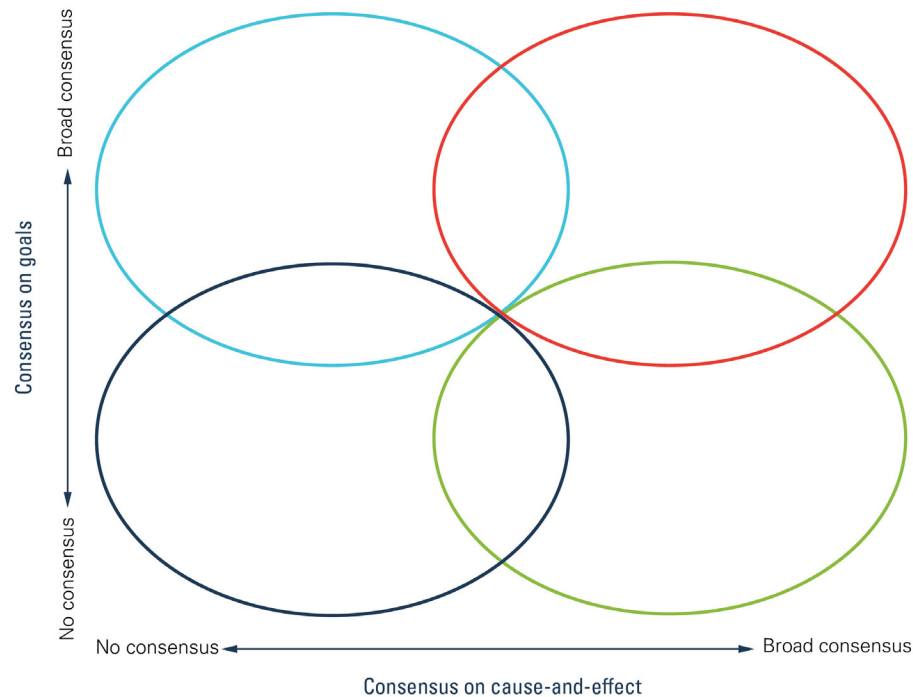
How can leaders convince individuals to cooperate and work together? There are a variety of tools, ranging from motivational, visionary speeches to command-and-control orders that an individual could use to elicit cooperative behavior. These are called the Tools of Cooperation.

The first important thing to know is that most of these tools don't work most of the time. As a result, leaders often fail when trying to manage change, as the tools they use waste credibility, energy, and resources. Therefore, the most important upfront action is to assess the organization's circumstance in terms of stakeholders' agreement on **what** the organization's goals should be and **how** it can achieve them.

Figure 1 depicts these two variables. The vertical axis measures the extent to which the people involved agree on the goals. In other words, what do they want? This incorporates the results they seek from being part of the schooling community, to what their values and priorities are, to which trade-offs they are willing to make to achieve those results. The extent of agreement can range from none (at the bottom) to complete agreement (at the top).

The most important upfront action is to assess the organization's circumstance in terms of stakeholders' agreement on *what* the organization's goals should be and *how* it can achieve them.

Figure 1. Tools of Cooperation



Correctly diagnosing stakeholders' agreement has profound implications for how to roll out any proposed change.

The second dimension is plotted on the horizontal axis. It measures the extent to which the people involved agree on cause and effect—which actions will lead to the desired result. In other words, how will we achieve our goals? On the right-hand side, strong agreement on cause and effect implies a shared view of the processes that should be used to get any particular outcome of interest, whereas little agreement on cause and effect places an organization on the left-hand side of the diagram.

Leaders seeking a specific change will find that figuring out their constituents' placement on this diagram is time well spent. Getting the diagnosis right has profound implications for how to roll out any proposed change.

Individuals in organizations in the upper-left domain of Figure 1 share common hopes for what will be gained from being part of the higher education institution, even though each might have a different



view of what actions will be required to fulfill those hopes. For example, a college's stakeholders may be highly committed to producing graduates that make a positive impact as citizens but have a range of views on how to accomplish this goal. Some faculty may favor more emphasis on the sciences and technology given the complex world. Others may favor doubling down on the humanities to help graduates make ethical choices. And still others may believe that tightly coupling the curriculum with employers and the community is important to situate learning in real-world challenges.

In contrast are schools in the lower-right corner. These colleges might have faculty with very little agreement on the goals of the institution. Some may favor research whereas others may value teaching. Still others may be thinking about the importance of financial sustainability, whereas others care about how to grow enrollment. But perhaps all agree on specific processes that allow the institution to deliver results by combining their different priorities.

Colleges and universities in the upper-right quadrant have individuals who agree both on what they want and how to get there. There's a deep meld of goals and culture. The challenge, then, for schools in this quadrant is that a clear consensus on both dimensions makes these organizations' cultures resistant to change. People are satisfied with what they get out of being in the organization and agree on how to maintain that status quo. When fundamental changes are roiling the education sector, however, it's difficult for the organization to change in response.

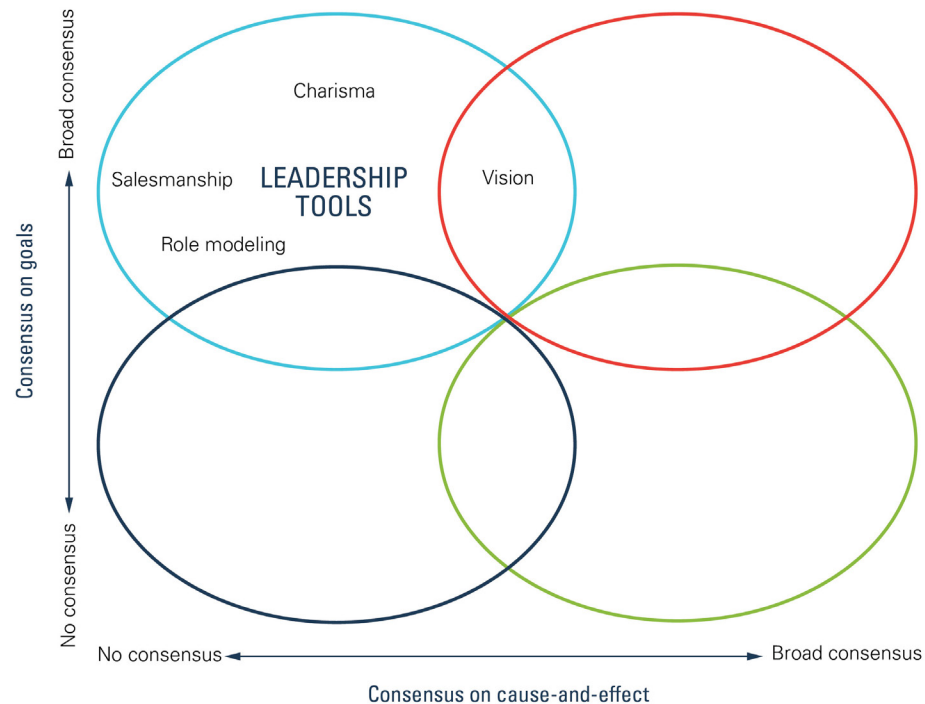
Finally, schools in the lower-left quadrant are made up of individuals who disagree both on what they want and on how the world works. This is the school where faculty and administrators have a wide range of goals and disagree on methods.

To be clear, there is no "best" situation for leaders. The key is recognizing which situation corresponds most closely to the situation they are in and then selecting the cooperation tools that will work effectively in that situation. This simple model applies to units that range from families, business units, and schools to corporations, school districts, and nations.

Leadership Tools

In the upper-left quadrant (see Figure 2), tools that are focused on results—as opposed to those that are focused on process—are more effective because there is strong consensus about what individuals want from being part of the organization. Charismatic leaders who command respect, for example, often don't address how to get things done. Instead, they motivate people to just do the work.

Figure 2. Leadership Tools

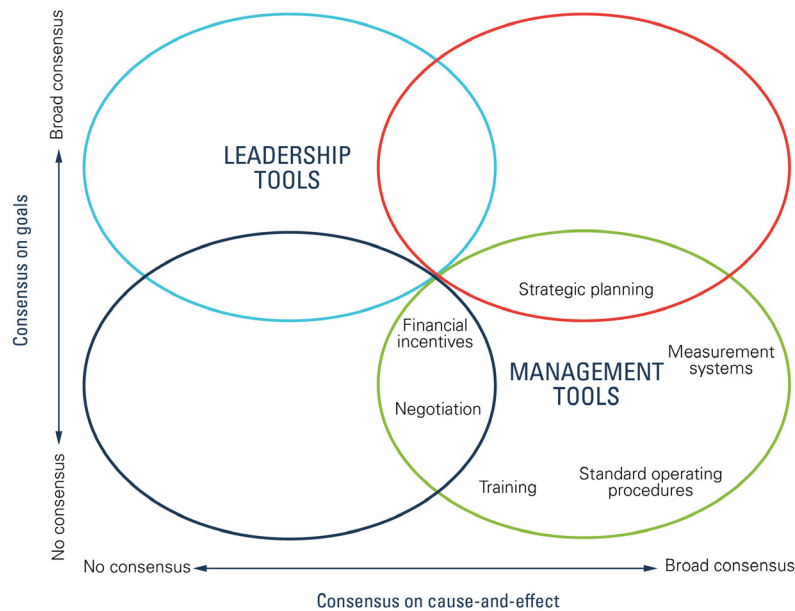


Think of the visionary or charismatic college president or the one with gravitas and good standing. Lofty statements and visions are effective here because members of the community are in agreement about what they want. They will follow a leader who appropriately rallies them to go get it. So long as the leader doesn't overly focus on the "how" upfront—where there may be plenty of disagreement or lack of firm conviction—and just lays out the plan with a focus on the goals, individuals will rally to the cause and overlook where they might disagree on what actions will lead to the results they all want.

Management Tools

In contrast is a college or university that sits in the lower-right quadrant of the matrix (see Figure 3). Here the tools that will work are coordinative and process-oriented in nature. These management tools include training or professional development, standard operating procedures, and measurement systems. For such tools to work, group members need to agree on cause and effect but not necessarily on what they want from their participation in the organization; otherwise, these efforts will fall flat. In these cases, a college leader can introduce a new program or set of procedures that faculty and other administrators agree will help the college, even if they differ markedly around the “why” behind these or what they hope to get out of continuing to do research and teach at the school.

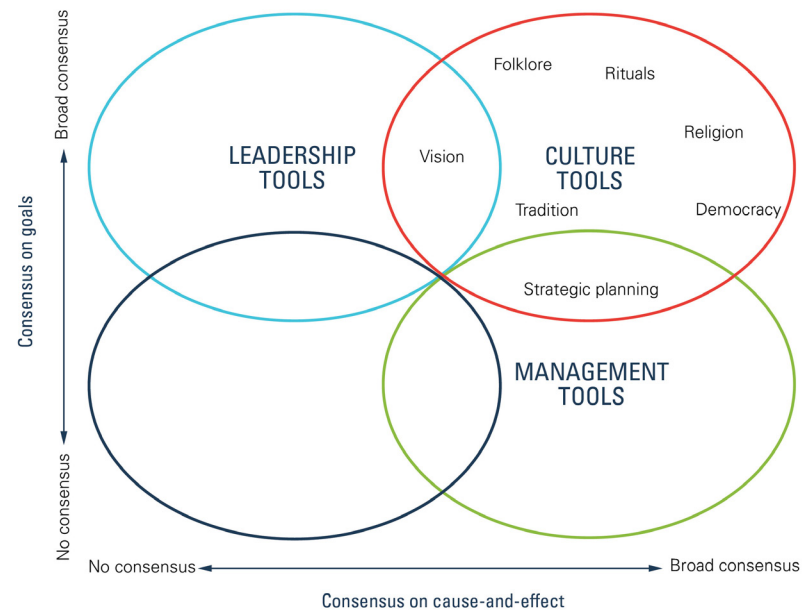
Figure 3. Management Tools



Culture Tools

In organizations that lie in the upper-right quadrant (see Figure 4), individuals will cooperate almost automatically to continue in the same direction. They have a deep consensus on priorities as well as what actions they need to take to achieve these priorities, which is the essence of a strong culture. In other words, in organizations with strong cultures, people instinctively prioritize similar options, and their common view of how the world works means that little debate is necessary about the best way to achieve those priorities.

Figure 4. Culture Tools

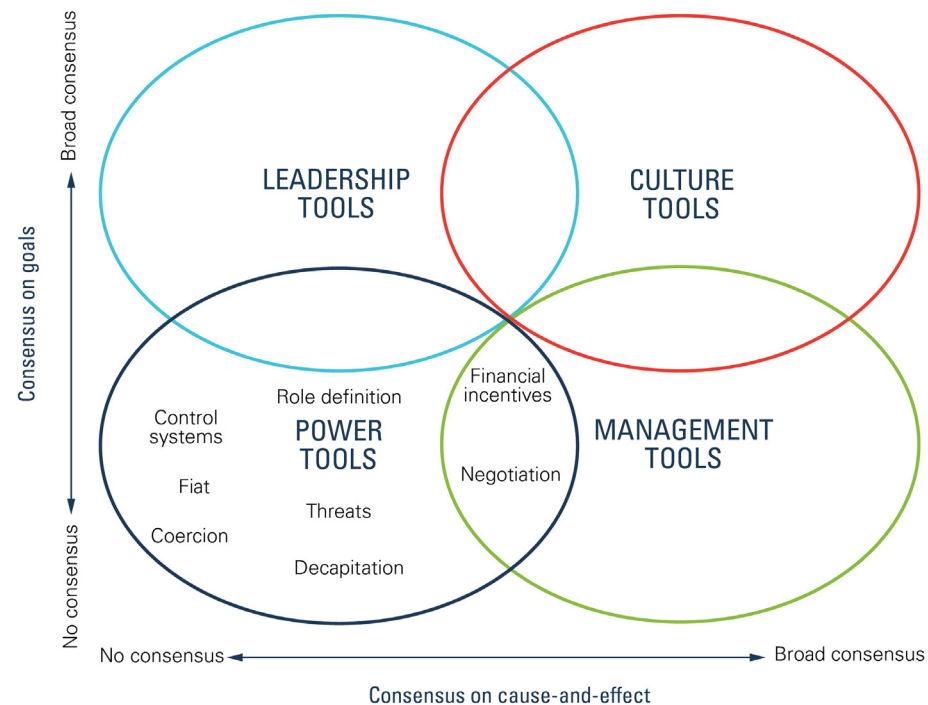


But this very strength can make such organizations highly resistant to change. The tools of cooperation in the culture quadrant—like ritual, folklore, and democracy—facilitate cooperation only to preserve the status quo. They aren't tools to cause change. Managers can also use leadership and management tools here, but only to reinforce the existing culture. For example, if a manager were to use a vision statement at odds with what employees wanted, it wouldn't work. Hewlett-Packard's Carly Fiorina learned this the hard way when she tried to challenge the "HP Way." Her public clashes with HP's employees and board resulted in her ouster.¹

Power Tools

When an organization's members share little consensus on either agreement dimension, the only tools that will elicit cooperation in pursuit of a new course are Power Tools such as fiat, force, coercion, and threats (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Power Tools



Higher education institutions that sit in this quadrant often create a challenging situation for leaders. Although power tools may work well in autocratic governments, in the world of shared governance, consensus-driven decision-making, and tenure that dominate much of traditional higher education, these tools are often unavailable to leaders.

What is a leader to do when they are in this situation? There's one more tool that doesn't appear on this matrix that leaders can use called the Tool of Separation.

Tool of Separation

There are instances in which there is such fundamental disagreement among the parties in an organization that it's simply impossible to reach consensus on a course of action—and yet no one has amassed the power to compel cooperation. In these instances, the Tool of Separation can help. It's called separation because it divides the conflicted parties into separate groups with a set of faculty, staff, administrators, and perhaps students who can be in strong agreement with others inside their own group, but they don't need to agree with those in other groups. To create a separate group, a leader may have to use the Power Tool of fiat, but after that, this tool creates other options for school leaders.

This is part of the logic behind the value of creating a separate, autonomous unit when schools face disruptive innovation. In business, the only instances where an industry's incumbent company remained the leader while also becoming the leader in the ensuing disruptive innovation² occurred when the corporate leaders wielded the separation tool. They established an independent business unit under the corporate umbrella and gave it unfettered freedom to pursue the disruptive opportunity with a unique business model. If employees responsible for sustaining (the established operation) and disruptive (the new) solutions work in the same business unit, they are forever conflicted about whether existing or new customers are most important, whether moving up-market or down offers more growth, and so on. Separation in instances such as these is the only viable course of action.

The Tool of Separation can help in instances in which there is such fundamental disagreement among the parties in an organization that it's simply impossible to reach consensus on a course of action.

TOOLS OF COOPERATION IN ACTION IN HIGHER ED

For leaders seeking insight into the Tools of Cooperation, the following four case studies each provide a snapshot of how the tools have been used in higher education institutions.

Leadership Tools at Yale University

Yale's former president Richard Levin possessed an ability as president to unite people across different backgrounds and beliefs.³ During his presidency, he articulated a vision where Yale would become a global university. According to Levin, Yale was initially a regional university that grew over time into a national university. Given the impact of globalization in the twenty-first century, Levin said that to continue to be a leader in the creation and dissemination of knowledge, it was time to transform Yale into a truly international university.⁴ This was a vision that was widely shared across the campus of faculty, administrators, alumni, and students. It buoyed many changes across the university.

As part of his vision, Levin also envisioned expanding the university outside of New Haven and the United States. He conceptualized starting a new university in Singapore affiliated with Yale that would break down the traditional department silos to create a global liberal arts curriculum.

Although faculty members believed in the vision of transforming Yale into a global institution, many faculty members disagreed with the specific idea of partnering with Singapore to start a liberal arts institution. Their primary objection was that the values and political climate in Singapore conflicted with Western perspectives on human rights and religious beliefs. Some worried about Singapore's restrictions on freedom of assembly, for example. Those concerned with the expansion didn't believe that Singapore was the right location in which to take Yale global. They did believe, however, that Yale should "remain at parity with, or move ahead of, other leading institutions with which we compete for students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty."⁵

This was a classic case of stakeholders agreeing on the goals but disagreeing on the means. To advance the specific work of starting a new liberal arts university in Singapore, Levin turned to leadership tools. That meant focusing on the vision rather than the specifics and appealing to the university's shared values.

In an interview with *Yale Alumni Magazine*, Levin outlined how he wanted to bring along the faculty and the broader community:⁶

- First, he noted, that both students and faculty would have increased opportunities to "broaden their education and research" by spending time in Singapore.
- Levin also argued that if Yale were to succeed in "contributing to the transformation of higher education in Asia, Yale's reputation for leadership ...[would] be strengthened and enhanced." This, in turn, would help Yale "attract the best students and faculty from Asia and around the world."
- Then Levin closed by invoking the history of Yale: "By helping to introduce a powerful, innovative version of liberal arts education to Asia, Yale would be making a major contribution to the region. Yale has had a seminal influence on US undergraduate education at least three times: through its widely imitated curriculum and pedagogy in the first half of the nineteenth century, by pioneering the development of the extracurriculum a half century later, and by adapting to America the concept of residential colleges in the 1930s. To lead a fourth round of major innovation in undergraduate education—this time in Asia—would be an exciting accomplishment. You could say, 'That's not what's in it for Yale—that's doing good for the world.' But doing good for the world is what Yale does."



By focusing on selling the shared vision, Levin was able to move the creation of a new university in Singapore forward despite continued opposition. In partnership with the National University of Singapore, Yale founded Yale-NUS in 2011 as the first liberal arts college in the country—and one of the only liberal arts institutions in Asia.

Levin and others aligned with the idea of starting a campus in Singapore emphasized that a new university could be a way to liberalize the elements of Singaporean society that made a traditional liberal arts education challenging. For example, as quoted in the *Yale Daily News*, geology and geophysics professor Jeffrey Park said, “Yale’s involvement with Yale-NUS College maintains the ‘Western’ influence on social conventions that might otherwise fall victim to a conformist pressure.”⁷

Although some Yale faculty members continued to object to Yale-NUS, the partnership continued until 2021 when NUS—not Yale—announced that it would back out of the arrangement and form a “New College” in 2025 that would merge Yale-NUS College with NUS’s University Scholars Programme and cease using the Yale name.⁸

Management Tools at Northeastern University

Today, Northeastern University is seen as an innovator and top research and teaching institution in American higher education. But when Richard Freeland became president of Northeastern University in 1996, that was far from the case.

According to an article in *Boston* magazine, the university was a “third-tier, blue-collar, commuter-based university” with crumbling parking lots and budget cutbacks that had caused the layoff of 875 employees in the early 1990s.⁹ It was ranked number 162 on the *U.S. News & World Report* “Best Colleges” rankings.

But Freeland saw an opportunity. If he could help Northeastern climb the *U.S. News* college rankings, he believed he could boost the university’s fortunes by charging and attracting significantly more money and allowing all stakeholders to do more and be better. Although faculty and other stakeholders may have had vastly different goals as part of the Northeastern community—indeed, many thought that climbing the rankings for its own sake didn’t address the underlying quality of the institution itself—the vast majority of stakeholders went along. They realized that whatever their opinion of the rankings and its various inputs, if Northeastern climbed them, they would see more resources and prestige and thus the ability to accomplish the goals they were prioritizing. There was broad consensus, in other words, on what actions would lead to what results—cause and effect—even if there were an array of views on what goals were worthwhile.

Freeland and Northeastern accordingly broke down the *U.S. News* rankings code and had the institution measure and optimize its operations against the various inputs. The goal of breaking

into the top 100 of the rankings even found its way into Northeastern's strategic plan. The focus on measurement systems caused Northeastern to constantly weigh investments into things like boosting student success and application volume, lowering class size, improving reputation, and so forth. For example, Northeastern realized that institutions received credit for the number of classes under 20 students, so it lowered caps on many classes to 19 "just to be sure."¹⁰ Big investments into dorm rooms to transform the university from a commuter campus helped boost graduation rates. Accepting the common application led to a rise in the number of applications—and an increase in selectivity.

By 2006, when Freeland retired, Northeastern cracked the top 100 of the rankings at number 98.

Power Tools and the Tool of Separation at Southern New Hampshire University

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is one of the largest, most successful universities in the world, with over 160,000 students enrolled. But it wasn't always this way. When its current president, Paul LeBlanc, joined SNHU in 2003, it was a struggling institution. Its enrollment was declining, and its finances put the university on the brink of survival.

One asset the university did have was an online offering, but it was small and stagnant. With its survival at stake, it wasn't hard to make the case that investing in online learning was critical. But to believe that online learning should be a core tenet of the future of the school was quite controversial. Not just that, but investing in online learning would also mean spending significant amounts on marketing to attract what traditional higher education viewed as an "unattractive audience"—namely, working adults. And to do online learning well would mean changing lots of the established processes and priorities of the university. In other words, there was little agreement on the goals or how the world worked.

To make progress, Paul LeBlanc first used a couplet of power tools—fiat and role definition. He did so in order to wield the Tool of Separation. LeBlanc separated the online division from the traditional campus and created a governance structure different from the one that oversaw the brick-and-mortar campus of the university.

To do this, LeBlanc took the question out of shared governance. He in essence said to faculty, "You're welcome to join us, but you don't have veto power to block us through shared governance."

He then moved online operations off-campus. Once there, LeBlanc used role definition to craft a different culture. No one could have an office, for example, and if there were exceptions—there were a handful of people who had to have offices—they had to have glass walls and no doors. SNHU hired a new person to head up the online operation. The team started rethinking every process to put the student experience at the core.

With that structure and separation in place, the university was able to change everything about its online division. The team first noticed that the students who were enrolling in the online programs were very different from those coming to the on-ground ones. In the latter case, it was typically high school graduates looking to take the next logical step in their educational journey. Online, the students were typically adults in the working world looking to "step it up" in their careers.¹¹ They had had all the life experience they could handle, as LeBlanc said, and what they wanted was the most efficient pathway to gain new skills.¹² To serve both groups well necessitated very different sets of processes.

For example, for the 18-year-old students it served, SNHU would talk to them about basic financial aid information during their junior year of high school. Not having specifics for at least a year worked fine for both the student and the university. Any student inquiry would take weeks to resolve because there was no urgency on either side.

But for older students who had urgency in their lives to step it up, they needed answers on financial aid right away. Their time to act was now or never. Waiting hours, let alone weeks, to respond was too late. What had to change at SNHU? "Pretty much everything," LeBlanc told the authors of the book *Competing Against Luck*.¹³ Students needed quick responses to inquiries about financial aid, whether previous college courses would count as credit toward an SNHU degree, and whether they had been admitted after applying. The months-long admissions process that was routine for high school students wouldn't work for these prospective students.

SNHU realized that it wasn't enough just to enroll students. It also had to support them to and through graduation. That meant focusing on the emotional and social dimensions around a student's journey. SNHU's online school began assigning students a personal adviser, for example, who would stay in constant contact with students and pick up on red flags in students' progress (in many cases, noticing warning signs before the students themselves did).

This also changed how SNHU measured success at each step of the student journey. For example, SNHU would have formerly measured how it responded to student inquiries in terms of how many packages were mailed out. It would then wait for the interested students to call. But SNHU Online measured its response time in minutes. The goal was to call a prospective student back in under 10 minutes.

The move to give the online division autonomy allowed it to see online learning not as just something to try and stave off an existential threat, but as an opportunity for SNHU to serve the millions of working adults from around the world who need more education to improve their lives. The team seized that opportunity. From serving roughly 500 online students in 2010, SNHU grew to serve roughly 17,000 students in 2012, 35,000 students by 2014, 60,000 in 2016, and over 130,000 by 2018. What's more, the success also helped the brick-and-mortar campus grow from roughly 2,500 students in 2010 to 3,913 students in 2018.¹⁴

Culture Tools at Simmons University

Like SNHU in 2003, Simmons University was a small institution in New England that was struggling in 2008. In the wake of the financial crisis, it had scarce resources. Helen Drinan moved from a role on the board to become the president with the mission of helping the institution first survive and then thrive.

Like LeBlanc, Drinan identified online learning as a place where the institution should invest to grow revenues. Simmons' first experiment in building an online degree program in healthcare administration didn't work out. But it allowed the university to learn a lot.

The experiment revealed where Simmons lacked the internal know-how to build and operate online programs. It also revealed that there was deep internal cultural resistance to operating online programs. The institution existed on the left-hand side of the Tools of Cooperation diagram. According to a Clayton Christensen Institute white paper by Alana Dunagan, "Faculty and staff were deeply anxious about maintaining quality while delivering online programs, and the processes and operations that worked well for Simmons' brick-and-mortar offerings didn't translate well to the online environment."¹⁵

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These learnings were valuable. When 2U, an online program management company, approached Simmons about taking its renowned nursing program online, Drinan said yes. The program and partnership were wildly successful.

Success changed the circumstances of the university. When Drinan first tried online learning, the university wasn't in the upper-right quadrant of the Tools of Cooperation diagram. But success with online learning helped shift the university to that quadrant.

As Dunagan wrote:

"Fears of online delivery...receded: Drinan now hears faculty concerns that the brick-and-mortar program might not be achieving the quality standards of the online program. Staff and faculty are energized by the college's ability to reach students from all corners of the country. The processes required to build the online program—including the course development process, the course scheduling process, and the support provided to admitted students—have laid a blueprint for improving Simmons' brick-and-mortar programs. Most tellingly, Simmons has launched six additional partnerships with 2U to build online graduate programs, including a master's in social work, a general MBA, a healthcare-focused MBA, a master's in behavior analysis, a master's in strategic communications, and a master's in public health."

Tuition revenue from Simmons' online programs soared from \$5.4 million in the 2014 fiscal year to roughly 10 times that amount.¹⁶

In other words, the university moved to have considerable consensus around goals and a shared theory of cause-and-effect, which changed the culture of the institution. Having a new culture meant that Drinan could now use culture tools—like those in shared governance—to continue to steer Simmons University's investments in online learning and improve its campus-based programs.

One administrator, Dana Grossman Leeman, was quoted as saying, "I'm tired of folks saying this is the way of the future. It's not. It's now."¹⁷

MECHANISMS OF MOVEMENT

This last example of Simmons University is an important one because it demonstrates a critical understanding about this framework: it's dynamic. Organizations and groups can move to different parts of the matrix over time.

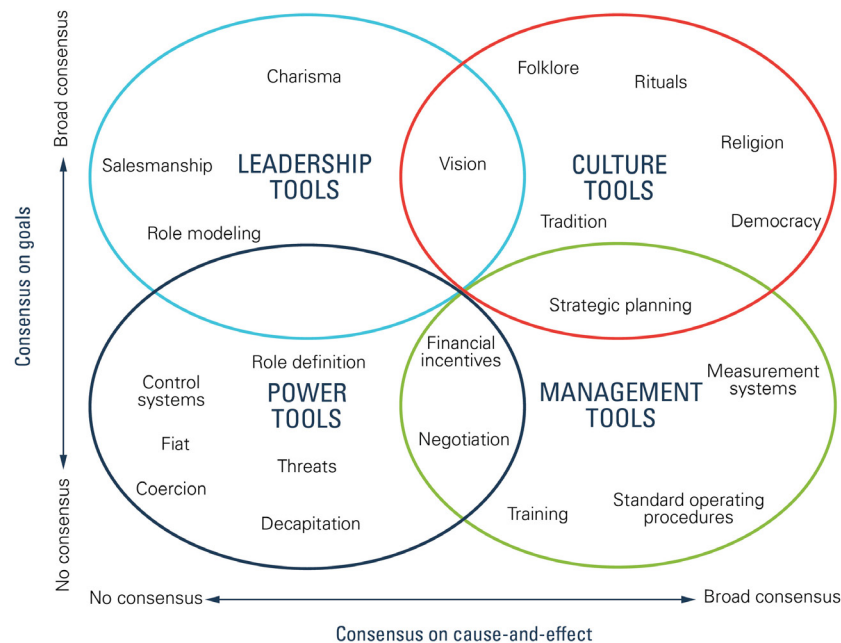
Success

For groups in the matrix's lower-left quadrant (see Figure 6), if their members succeed repeatedly in doing their work, the success tends to build consensus on both goals and cause-and-effect until a strong culture ultimately emerges within the group. Eventually, if the formula that led to success stops working and the organization drifts into crisis, then consensus weakens. Success moves an organization toward the upper right, which is what happened at Simmons University; failure and crisis shift it toward the lower left.

When there is at least a modicum of agreement on the goals of an organization but less agreement on how to achieve them, success can be a powerful way to move a whole organization to agreement on a new set of actions.

But it takes time. That means that a leader hoping to use success to move an organization to the upper-right quadrant must have the time and political capital—in the form of support from the board and other salient stakeholders—so that they can benefit from the success-driven change in an organization's agreement.

Figure 6. Tools of Cooperation



Common Language

The second mechanism of movement is when people are given a common language and a common way to frame a problem, which can occur if there is a sound theory that people broadly understand. In most meetings where the participants are plotting change, they talk past each other. For example, in a college, one person might see paltry research budgets as the problem. Another targets the emphasis on STEM at the expense of the humanities. A third contends that administrative bloat is causing problems. And so on. They talk past each other with their solutions, and they can't agree on solutions because they don't share a common definition of the problem.

A prerequisite for getting agreement is having a common language and a shared framing of the problem. To illustrate how to solve this, in the mid-1990s Intel was being disrupted at the low end of its market by the much cheaper microprocessors that Cyrix and AMD sold. Intel's chairman Andy Grove established an educational seminar at which Intel's top 2,000 managers (this was not a small undertaking!) studied the disruption model from Clayton Christensen's book *The Innovator's Dilemma*. As a result, Intel launched its Celeron chip at the bottom of its market—a disruptive strategy

that was counterintuitive to the common logic of how to make money at Intel. It was very successful in fending off the would-be disruptors.

Reflecting on that history, Grove later told Christensen, “The disruption model didn’t give us any answers. But it gave us a common language and a common way to frame the problem so that we could reach consensus around a counterintuitive course of action.”¹⁸ In other words, a shared and sound model of causality, which brings with it a common language and a common framing of the problem, can shift an organization toward the upper-right quadrant.

The likelihood of this technique working is, of course, contingent on people being ready to learn; it’s not nearly as powerful a mechanism of movement as success. But it works faster. One observation is that it often helps if an outside group introduces the common framing, rather than the leader. It’s hard, but not impossible, to be a prophet in your own land.

Figure 7. Tools of Cooperation Use Case

Tools of Cooperation	Use Case
Power Tools: Threats, role definition, control systems, coercion	If employees disagree on both goals and how to achieve them.
Leadership Tools: Vision, charisma, salesmanship, role modeling	If employees agree on goals but disagree on how to achieve them.
Culture Tools: Ritual, folklore, democracy	If employees agree on both goals and how to achieve them. Use the Tool of Separation to disrupt high-level agreement about goals and methods that could otherwise preserve the status quo.
Management Tools: Measurement systems, standard operating procedures, training	If employees disagree on goals but agree on how to achieve them.



THE POWER OF EDUCATION

The story of Intel should offer leaders on college campuses hope. Educators are ultimately in the business of educating—helping to lead forth by building language, framing challenges, and facilitating discussions with disparate points of view.

Making sure that an institution’s stakeholders agree on language and then introducing new framings—not just to a school system’s students, but also to its faculty and other stakeholders—represents an opportunity to deepen understanding, create agreement, and build consensus for change. Given that this is the work educators do for a living, it presents a natural opportunity that many other organizations lack. It’s an opportunity on which leaders in the business of education can capitalize to create more progress in the pursuit of building institutions that better serve an array of stakeholders.

NOTES

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2. A disruptive innovation is one that transforms a market characterized by offerings that are complicated, expensive, and relatively inaccessible to one where the services are simpler, more affordable, and more convenient. The leading organizations typically struggle to succeed when a disruptive innovation emerges in their field.
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About the Institute

The Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank dedicated to improving the world through Disruptive Innovation. Founded on the theories of Harvard professor Clayton M. Christensen, the Institute offers a unique framework for understanding many of society's most pressing problems. Its mission is ambitious but clear: work to shape and elevate the conversation surrounding these issues through rigorous research and public outreach.

About the author



Michael B. Horn is the co-founder of and a distinguished fellow at the Institute. He strives to create a world in which all individuals can build their passions and fulfill their potential through his writing, speaking, and work with a portfolio of education organizations. He is the author of many books, including the recently released *From Reopen to Reinvent: (Re)creating School for Every Child*. Michael holds a BA in history from Yale University and an MBA from the Harvard Business School.

