

Thinking differently: Leadership in Mining

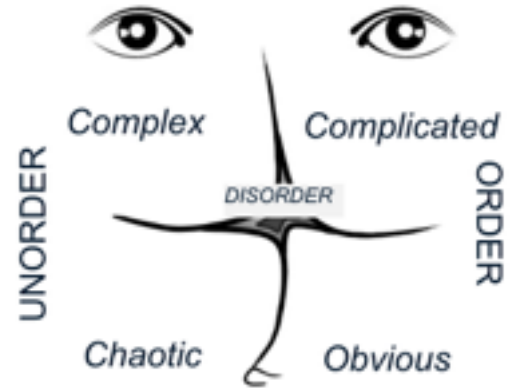
Imagine as a Mine manager seeing the world with one eye open. Would it be disastrous? Possibly but probably not since you won't know what you are missing. Frustrating? Yes, because things you expect to occur don't always happen and you don't know why. With only one eye open, you have an incomplete view of how the mining business runs on the laws of science.

The Cynefin Framework describes what you will see with both eyes open. Each domain has its own distinct set of characteristics, some of which are highlighted below.

One eye represents the Ordered side and the other eye the Unordered. For 400+ years we lived with only the Ordered eye open. In the last 40 years research in complexity science and chaos theory has opened the second eye and unveiled different perspectives.

Here's a different view of leadership. It's no longer top-down, "once size fits all" but situational based on the Cynefin domain you are in. As a leader your role is to impose constraints and relax them as needed to permit flow between the Ordered and the Unordered side of the Cynefin Framework.

For example, if you are in charge of a change initiative at the mine, you will adjust the constraints to play various leadership roles to drive the project from start to finish with an eye open to navigate through complexity.



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“ Finally we shall place the Sun himself at the center of the Universe. All this is suggested by the systematic procession of events and the harmony of the whole Universe, if only we face the facts, as they say, **'with both eyes open'**.”

Copernicus

OBVIOUS DOMAIN

Sense-categorize-respond
Rely on intuitive experience
Coordinate
Focus on structure, function
Clear end in mind as target
Min/max Efficiency
Best practices
Boss

COMPLICATED DOMAIN

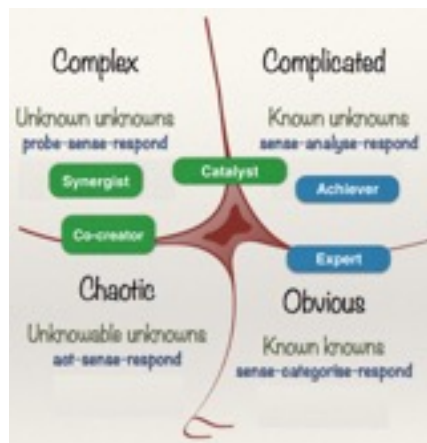
Sense-analyze-respond
Rely on fact-based evidence
Cooperate
Focus on systems, processes
Idealistic Future state
Optimized Effectiveness
Good practices
Manager

COMPLEX DOMAIN

Probe-sense-respond
Rely on educated hunches
Collaborate
Focus on networks, relationships
Evolutionary potential of Present
Diversity and self-organization
Emergent practices
Influencer

CHAOTIC DOMAIN

Act-sense-respond
Rely on gut instincts
Charismatic control
Focus on followers
Random
Fast exit out of chaos
Novel practices
Hero



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In the Obvious domain, your role as leader involves trusting your people to perform and providing expert direction only if requested. Leadership in the Complicated domain means using formal authority and given power to coordinate people, process, and technology to achieve goals. All of the preceding can be accomplished with just the Ordered side eye open. However, when progress is stymied by confusion, uncertainty, or resistance, opening the other eye is necessary to breakthrough the logjam and lead them into the Complex domain.

The Complex domain has its basis in complex adaptive systems theory. This is no place for a command & control type leader. Your role is to act as a Catalyst and enable individuals to open both their eyes and ears to dialogue, observe, probe, experiment, and explore. As a Synergist you connect people by working with them to recognize hidden behaviour patterns that explain why people do what they do.

When understanding is attained, the leadership role shifts to co-creating new solutions and bringing them back to the Complicated domain for implementation.