

# Who Wants to Lead?

Collaborative Leading, Disruption and Boundaries

By Brigid Carroll

Now is the time for nonprofit leaders, regardless of their role or position in an organization, to identify the adaptive work and to bring that work forward as central to organizational success. Adaptive work is for everyone and can help develop more effective collaborations within organizations as well as with other nonprofits and key constituencies.

*Who moved my unicorn: Adaptive versus Technical challenges in the nonprofit field*

# Collaborative Leading, Disruption and Boundaries



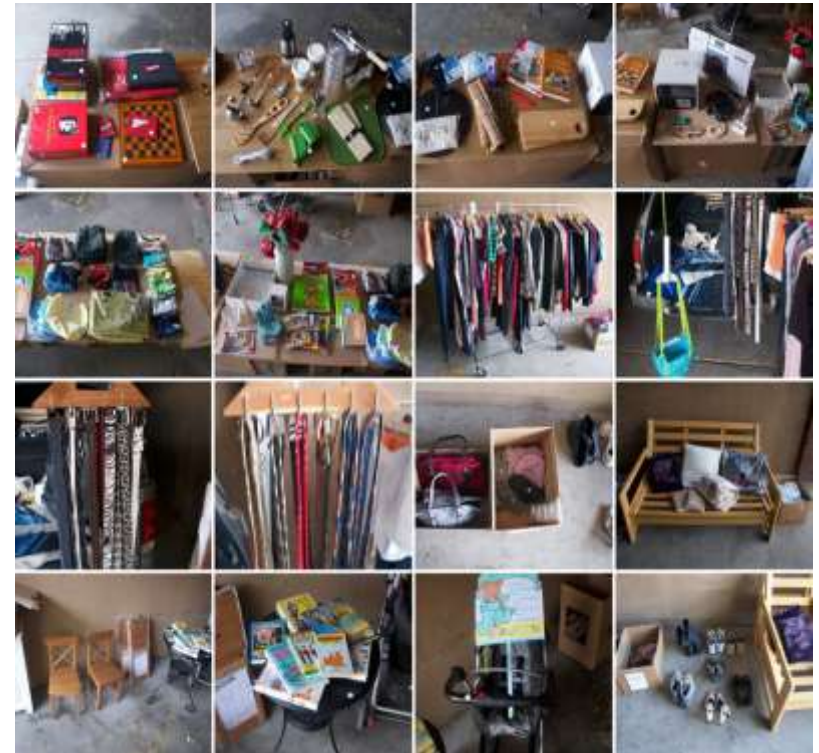
# Collaborative Leading, Disruption and Boundaries



*“In the beginning, our first thoughts were just to help people, so there was no such thing as a big picture in our vision at all.”*

# Collaborative Leading, Disruption and Boundaries

*“We did the basic 'Band-Aid' services (that's what we called them). We couldn't do anything major because we all were working and none of us had any money, so three of us put little food pantries in our garages and we also had the clothing and some of the furniture in our garage.”*



# Collaborative Leading, Disruption and Boundaries

*“When I grew up we didn’t have a lot. So, just different experiences I had. I remember one time in grade school we were having a play and we were supposed to do a square dance... thing, and so I wore what I considered to be my best jeans down there and this other kid that I knew said, 'Jesus, those things look horrible, you should have told me I would have loaned you one of my pair of pants.'”*

*“And I just made a joke and said we’re supposed to be westerners and so I wore these pants but really they were the best pants I had!”*



# Collaborative Leading, Disruption and Boundaries



*“We are getting to have a larger base because of all of the people here that are doing so much, the staff plus volunteer’s, and we are always on the look out for new volunteers. A lot of our volunteers and staff have a lot of empathy, and some of our staff were clients and then volunteers, and even some of our other staff maybe had not been clients but they grew up in situations where they were very poor and so they have really good understanding of what’s going on.”*





# Collaborative Leading, Disruption and Boundaries



1971



1976



1982



1987



2013

# How does this organization make a difference?

- In 2012 MEND raised \$11,626,960 in cash and in kind donations.
- 94.7% of that was spent on program services to help those in need
- 2.1% on administration and other expenses
- 3% of that was spent on fundraising.
- 37,800 individuals each month
- More than 4,400 individuals volunteered 167,982 hours
- 24 people overall were employed at this time

# *“sharing leadership”-leadership that blurs internal and external boundaries”*

Local Forces for Good by Leslie Crutchfield & Heather McLeod-Grant

The primary key to MEND's success is it's over 5,000 volunteers who perform 99% of the collective work of our organization. We also have collaborations with over 370 other groups that not only assist us to provide our services to our clients but also offer referrals to other agencies that provide services not available at MEND. Finally, we have a number of foundations, businesses and individuals who support MEND financially, many of whom have been contributors for a number of years.

Guidestar

*“When I talk about sharing leadership, people say to me,  
Volunteers can't do that”*

MEND CEO

# Collaborative Leading, Disruption and Boundaries

*“high-impact nonprofits focus on mobilizing forces beyond their four walls, rather than worrying only about internal management or scaling up their organizations. The most successful nonprofits, we found, spend most of their time trying to change entire systems by advocating for government policies, tapping into the power of free markets, nurturing nonprofit networks, and building movements”*

Local Forces for Good by Leslie Crutchfield & Heather McLeod-Grant



*“Kiwis care very much about causes, and want to start and be involved in good works.*

*There’s one NFP organisation per 170 New Zealanders - 27,380 in total.*


*This is substantially lower than Australia with 422 NFPs per head and the US with 339.*

*Since 2010, there have been 2.5 charities established each business day in New Zealand.”*

(JBWere New Zealand Cause Report 2017)

# Adaptive Leadership?

## Distinguishing Technical from Adaptive Challenges



	What's the Work?	Who does the work?
Technical	Apply current know-how	Authorities
Adaptive	Learn new ways	The people with the problem

(Heifetz and Linsky, 2002)

*Re-examine beliefs and systems and way of doing things.*

*Your own first.*

# Technical versus Adaptive

## Technical-leaning questions around financial stability

- What policies will help increase financial stability?
- What grants can we seek over the next 6 months?
- Do we have the capacity to do another fundraising event this year?
- How long can we stretch our current funding if we limit expenses?

## Adaptive-leaning questions around financial stability

- Is our current business model the best means for ensuring a financially viable organization? If not, what model would work better?
- What service cost-structures would appeal to our customers? What would they be willing to pay for?
- What competitors' programs could make us irrelevant? How? What can we learn from them?

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# New Zealand Leadership Institute

