

Adaptive Leadership- Stakeholder Values, Loyalties, and Losses

Healthy Start CAN Workshop Scenario

The objective of this case study is to demonstrate key concepts from Heifetz's Adaptive Leadership model- Values, Loyalties, and Losses approach to stakeholder analysis. This case has been fictionalized in order to protect identities and for the purposes of this exercise the CAN community is called Blue Lake.

Community Profile:

Blue Lake is a medium-size urban city with about 700,000 permanent residents. Historically, Blue Lake has been a conservative city. Demographically, the population of Blue Lake is very diverse, and nearly half (44%) of the population identifies as Black or African American. Unfortunately, there are large economic and health inequities between Black and white communities of Blue Lake. In 2020, the median household income for white families is over twice that of Black families (approximately \$150,000 and \$68,000, respectively). According to a recent health equity report, African Americans in Blue Lake are six times more likely than whites to die from diabetes-related complications.

The makeup of Blue Lake's Healthy Start CAN aims to reflect the diversity of the city, although people of color are in the minority membership. The staff include three who identify as Black or African American, one as Asian/Pacific Islander, two as Latinx, and the remaining ten as white. The CAN Director identifies as a white woman who is relatively new to the community of Blue Lake.

The Challenge:

Blue Lake's Healthy Start CAN is scheduled to hold its monthly meeting this week. The purpose of this specific meeting is to discuss Blue Lake CAN's workplan for the coming calendar year, and the agenda is full. Blue Lake's CAN director plans to use the entire 90-minutes finalizing the plan, developing a timeline, and discussing each CAN member's role.

Only a select number of Blue Lake's CAN were invited to participate in the development of the workplan. Upon review of the meeting agenda and workplan, Blue Lake's CAN members of color shared that they wished to see a stronger emphasis on addressing the social determinants of health as Blue Lake has seen a steady rise in community violence and negative outcomes for Black and Latiné mothers and babies. Blue Lake's CAN Director felt that activities adequately addressed social determinants of health and did not invite changes to the workplan.

The day before the meeting, a racist attack takes place in Blue Lake and two teens are seriously injured. Blue Lake's CAN Director begins hearing from CAN members that they would like to discuss this horrible attack during the CAN meeting and hold space for one another to reflect on what has happened and how to address the mental health and safety implications for the community.

Blue Lake's CAN is faced with an adaptive challenge to provide safe spaces to meaningfully engage in dialogue and acknowledge its external work with communities to form relationships and build trust with those most impacted by racism, share power, increase social capital for those disenfranchised, and be intentional in understanding the history of local culture. They must make a sensible decision promptly.

- How should Blue Lake's CAN shift the meeting agenda in response to recent events?
- Which stakeholders are key to engage in this discussion and in this work to support the physical safety and emotional wellbeing of CAN members?