

Leadership Without Easy Answers

Chapter 8:

Creative Deviance on the Frontline

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Introduction

- Leadership in people without authority.
- Provides the capacity within a system to see through the blind spots of the system – implied: unforeseen solutions.
- Leaders without authority get to ask the hard questions.
- Leadership here means: engaging people to **make progress** on the **adaptive problems** they face (p 187). *also:* since process involves both **teaching and learning**, Leadership requires an “**educative strategy**” (p 188).

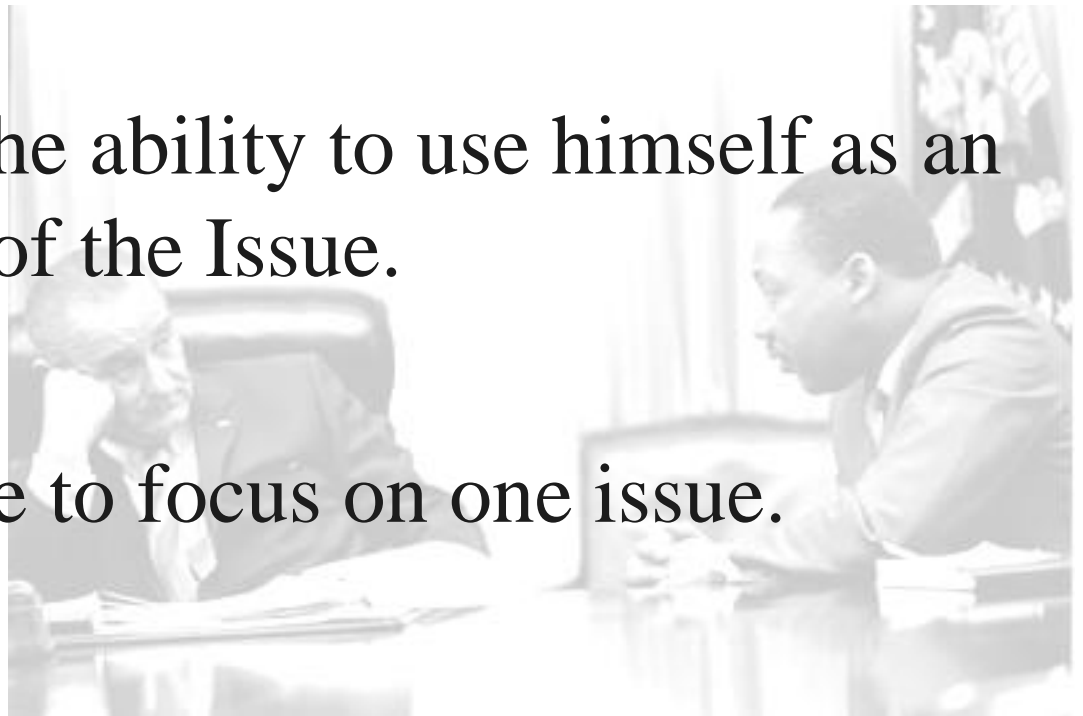
Advantages

- The constraints of authority suggest that there may also be advantages to leading without authority
- A leader has more latitude for “creative deviance” (p188).
- Issue Focus
- Frontline Information



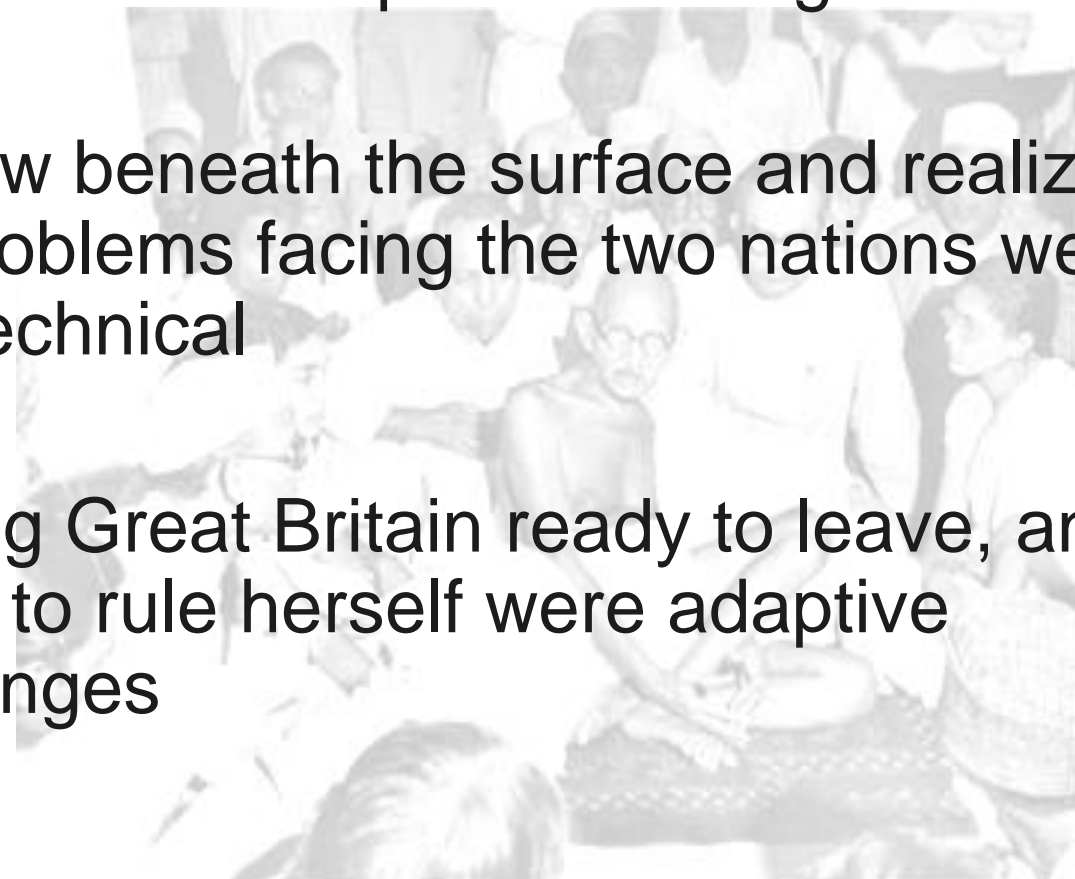
Martin Luther King Jr And President Johnson

- King had the leeway to dramatize issues in ways that Johnson could not
- He also had the ability to use himself as an embodiment of the Issue.
- King was able to focus on one issue.



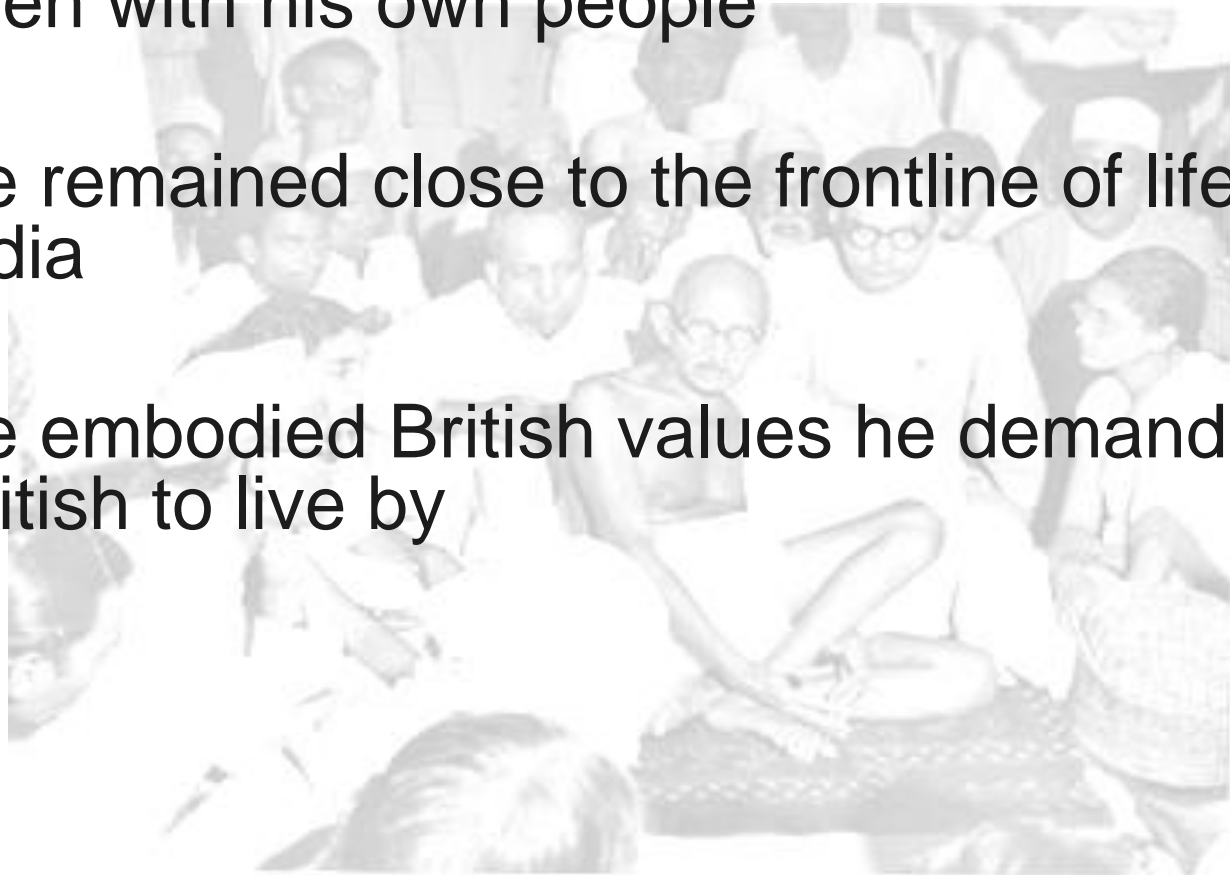
Gandhi

- Identified the adaptive challenge
- He saw beneath the surface and realized that the problems facing the two nations were non-technical
- Getting Great Britain ready to leave, and India ready to rule herself were adaptive challenges



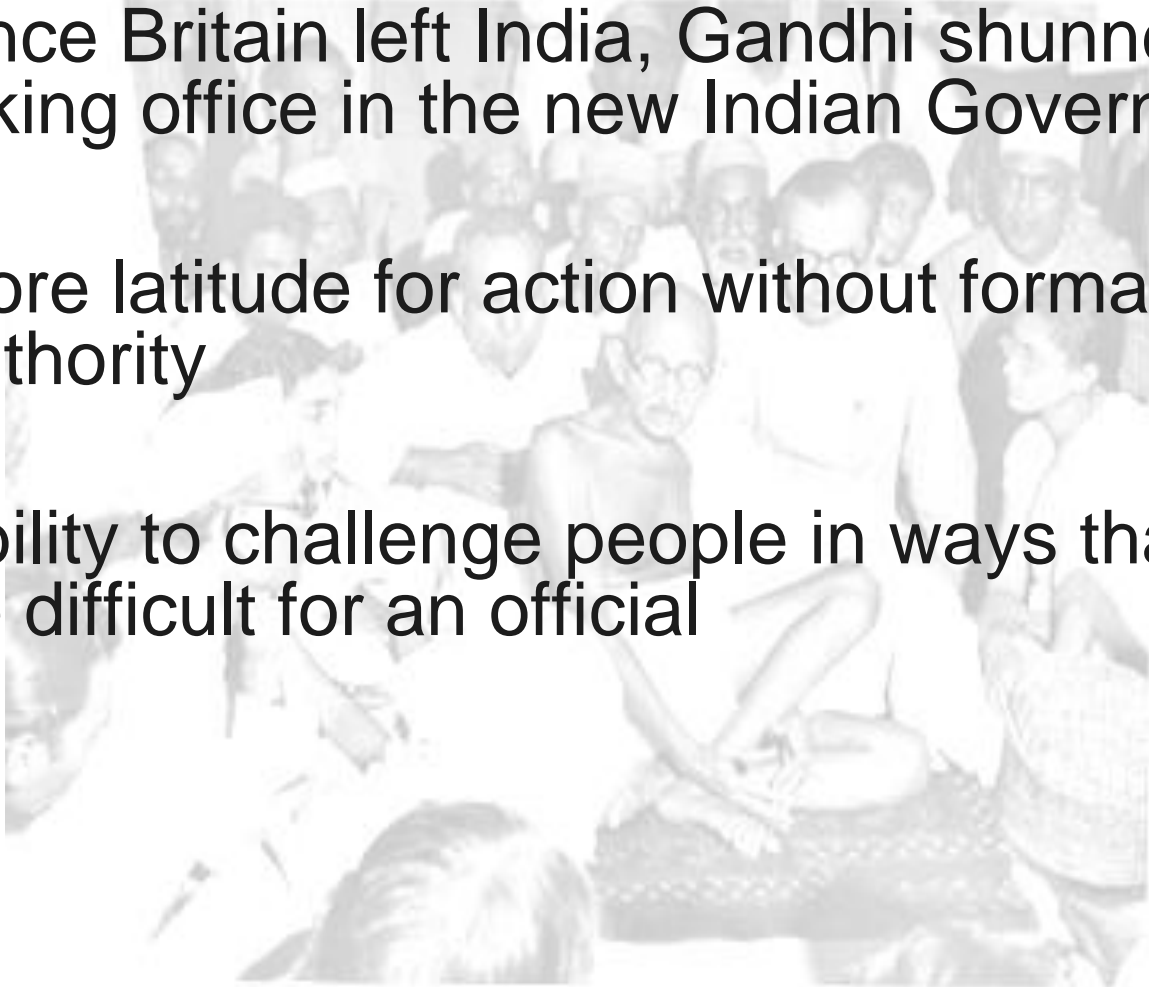
Gandhi

- Gandhi didn't always have informal authority, even with his own people
- He remained close to the frontline of life in India
- He embodied British values he demanded the British to live by



Gandhi

- Once Britain left India, Gandhi shunned taking office in the new Indian Government
- More latitude for action without formal authority
- Ability to challenge people in ways that might be difficult for an official



Margaret Sanger

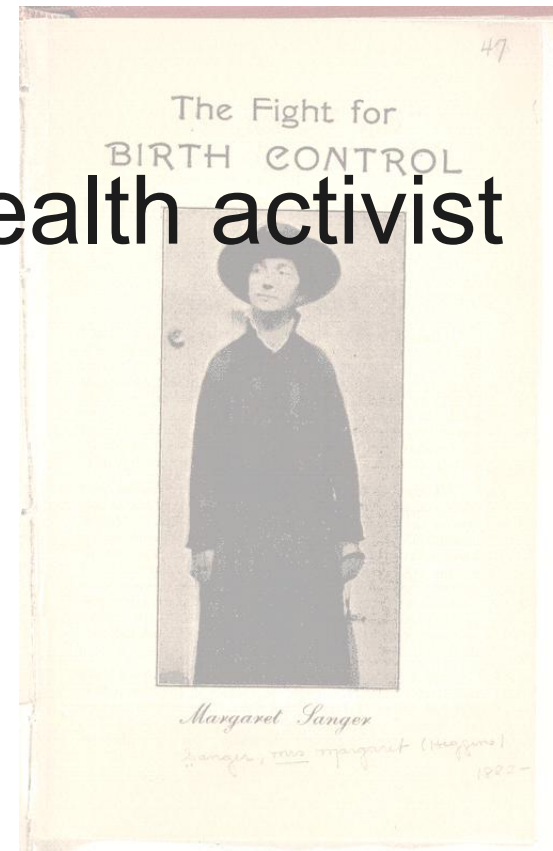
- History
- Creative Deviance on the Frontline
- Adaptive Work



Margaret Sanger

History:

- Pioneer Women's health activist
- "The Woman Rebel"
- Public Attention



Creative Deviance on the Frontline

- Framed debates in more understandable way to appeal to a broader audience
- She separated herself from all other issues to focus on contraception
- Drew medical professionals to let them play “experts”

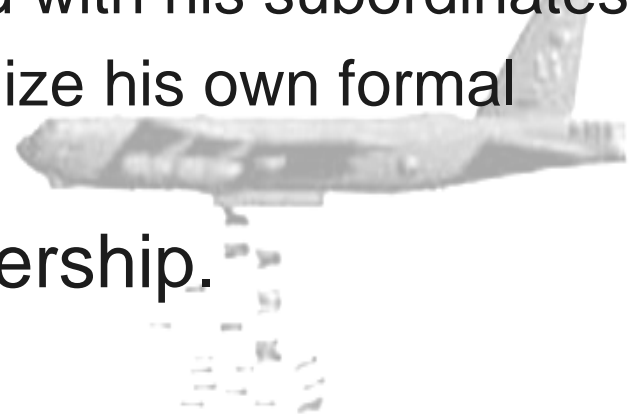
Adaptive Work

- Adaptive work begins as a educative strategy
- Must place cause in the context of the values of the opposition
- Lead across two boundaries
 - Formal (within their organization)
 - Informal (within the bounds of a wider network)

Formal & Informal Authority

Bomber Pilot

- Problem: faced resistance from authority above himself
- Saw one of two possible options:
 - follow orders - jeopardize his life and those under his command as well as undermine the informal authority he held with his subordinates.
 - to disobey would jeopardize his own formal authority
- Saw no options for leadership.



Formal & Informal Authority

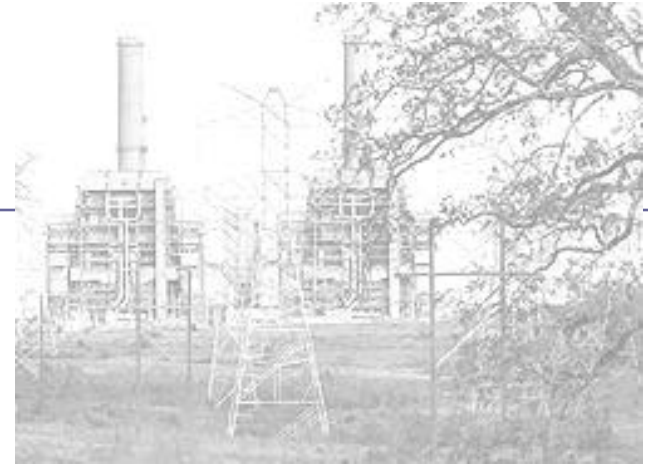
Infantry Officer

- Problem: given orders that were needlessly dangerous.
 - To obey orders would jeopardize the life of his command and himself and undermine both his formal and informal authority with his subordinates.
 - To disobey would put his formal authority at risk.
- Instead of **avoidance**, he sought a way to **accommodate** both obedience and insubordination.
- Used **adaptive learning** and led his men so that **together** they could find a solution to the dilemma. Employed **creative deviance** (i.e. innovation)

Summary

- When Gandhi, Sanger, *et al* gained informal authority it was “not a precondition for leading, but a *product* of leading [emphasis mine]” (p 205).
- As authority was gained it began to act as a constraint because of the conflicting expectations of mixed constituencies (p 205).
- On distinguishing Leadership from Authority: Leadership is to take responsibility beyond expectations. Furthermore, Leadership is an activity that is often performed *without authority* precisely because it is operating beyond anyone’s expectations. *Implied*: if successful, new authority will be granted/given/gained.

Class Exercise



- What's the problem?
- Who is affected by this problem?
- Without any formal authority how would you go about rectifying the problem?
- Who's your target audience?

The case of TXU Corporation

- Proposal: build 11 coal fire power plants
 - which would reduce the cost of energy
 - increase harmful emissions.
- Public outcry led by environmental groups.
- Environmental groups road to influence
 - Forged coalitions
 - Garnered support from formal authority
 - Led Corporation through a process of adaptive learning.

