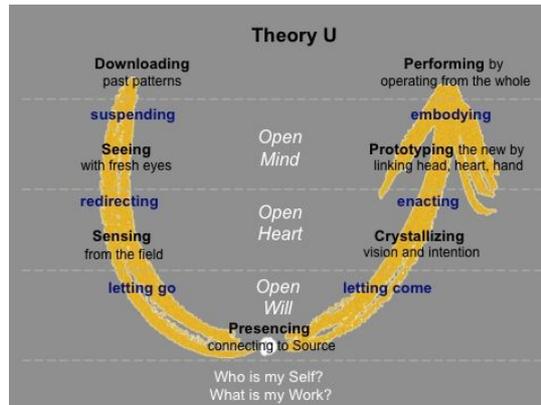


LEARNING PATTERNS

Theory U

How to lead and co-create from the emerging yet unknown future



“The ability to shift from reacting against the past to leaning into and presencing an emerging future is probably the single most important leadership capacity today.” Otto Scharmer

Tags

Social - Leadership and Empowerment

Whole System - Whole System Design / Monitoring and Evaluation

Challenge

Today, in most social systems, we collectively produce results that no one wants. These results show up in the form of environmental, social, and cultural destruction. The ecological divide (which disconnects self from nature), the social divide (which disconnects self from other), and the spiritual divide (which disconnects self from self) shape the larger context in every large system change today. We know a great deal about what leaders do and how they do it. But we know very little about the inner place, the source from which they operate.

Solution

Successful leadership depends on the quality of attention and intention that the leader brings to any situation. The nature of the inner place in leaders is something of a mystery to us. At its core, leadership is about shaping and shifting how individuals and groups attend to and subsequently respond to a situation. Learning to recognize the habits of attention in a business culture requires, among other things, a particular kind of listening. Theory U, initiated by Otto Scharmer, speaks of four different types of listening: downloading, factual listening, empathic listening, and generative listening.

In summary, Theory U illuminates a hidden dimension of leadership—the inner place from which leaders operate. Profound change today not only requires a shift of the mind, it requires a shift of will and a shift of the heart - a deeper shift called “presencing.” A blend of the words “presence” and “sensing,” presencing signifies a heightened state of attention that allows individuals and groups to operate from a future space of possibility that they feel wants to emerge. Being able to facilitate that shift is the essence of leadership today.

References

Website : www.presencing.com

www.ottoscharmer.com/

Books : Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges Paperback by C. Otto Scharmer

Articles:

https://www.presencing.com/sites/default/files/page-files/Theory_U_Exec_Summary.pdf

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