



THE CRAWFORD FUND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## Food and Nutrition Security: Transformative Partnerships, Local Leadership and Co-Design

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# Re-thinking Partnerships and Capacity Building to Support Transformational Impacts of R&D

*Focus: A practitioners view of the place of the individual and relationships*

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# Warm Data

Unlike "cold data," which refers to objective, quantifiable information, warm data captures the contextual, relational, and systemic elements that are often overlooked in traditional data analysis.

Nora Bateson



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## Self-actualization

Desire to accomplish everything that one can, to become the most that one can be



## Esteem needs

Self-confidence and independence, respect and acknowledgment from others



## Love and belonging

Friendships, family, social groups, community, intimacy



## Safety needs

Protection, stability and well-being, health and financial security



## Physiological needs

Food, water, breathing, homeostasis, sexual reproduction

## We all work with models

- They are guides to reality, but are not reality
  - We are skilled at turning tools into prescriptions
  - Models are guides that can help us diagnose or make sense of the particular circumstances in which we are operating
  - Maslow, innovation change etc as heros, etc
- Lesson – (i) Always be skeptical of received wisdom and (ii) returning to first principles is good practice.



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# Contention: in partnerships we over-prescribe “solutions”

We expect and plan partnership projects to deliver (almost like filling out a proforma)

**Shared Goals      Mutual Benefits      Collaborative Effort**

But partnerships under-perform

- 1. Misaligned Objectives:** Differences in goals and expectations can lead to conflicts and inefficiencies.
- 2. Cultural Differences:** Diverse organizational cultures and practices can hinder collaboration.
- 3. Communication Barriers:** Poor communication can result in misunderstandings and delays.
- 4. Resource Imbalances:** Disparities in resources and capabilities can create power imbalances and dependency issues.
- 5. Trust Issues:** Lack of trust can undermine cooperation and lead to conflicts.



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# Dimensions of collaborative governance capacity (adapted from

Foster-Fishman et al. 2001)

## Individual capacity



Skills and knowledge of network members that can be leveraged to solve collective problems, including:

- Collaborative skills
- Positive attitudes regarding collaboration
- Leadership skills

## Relational capacity



Social relationships that can be leveraged to solve collective problems, including:

- Trust among network members
- Strong internal relationships
- Strong external relationships

## Organizational capacity



Structural attributes of a network that can be leveraged to solve collective problems, including:

- Formalized procedures
- Effective communication
- Sufficient resources

## Institutional capacity



Practices and norms that can be leveraged to solve collective problems, including:

- Collaborative governance norms
- Power sharing practices
- Learning orientation

Not discrete rather they interact and overlap

## Warm Data from AgR4D

1. Participants often reflect that the major benefit from partnership activities was ***learning new ways to work***
2. This is seen as an observation, not an outcome because ***capacity building of people sits outside the project*** too often
3. Project reports often reflect that resources do not allow for ***training of individuals*** to work in new ways, and we assume that these will not be available - **not seen as legitimate/valuable)**

Lesson: capacity building must be part of the core research program



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# The MYTHOLOGIES we create

- CHANGE/TRANSFORMATION
- The CULT of the HERO LEADER
  - INNOVATION
- GROWTH MINDSET









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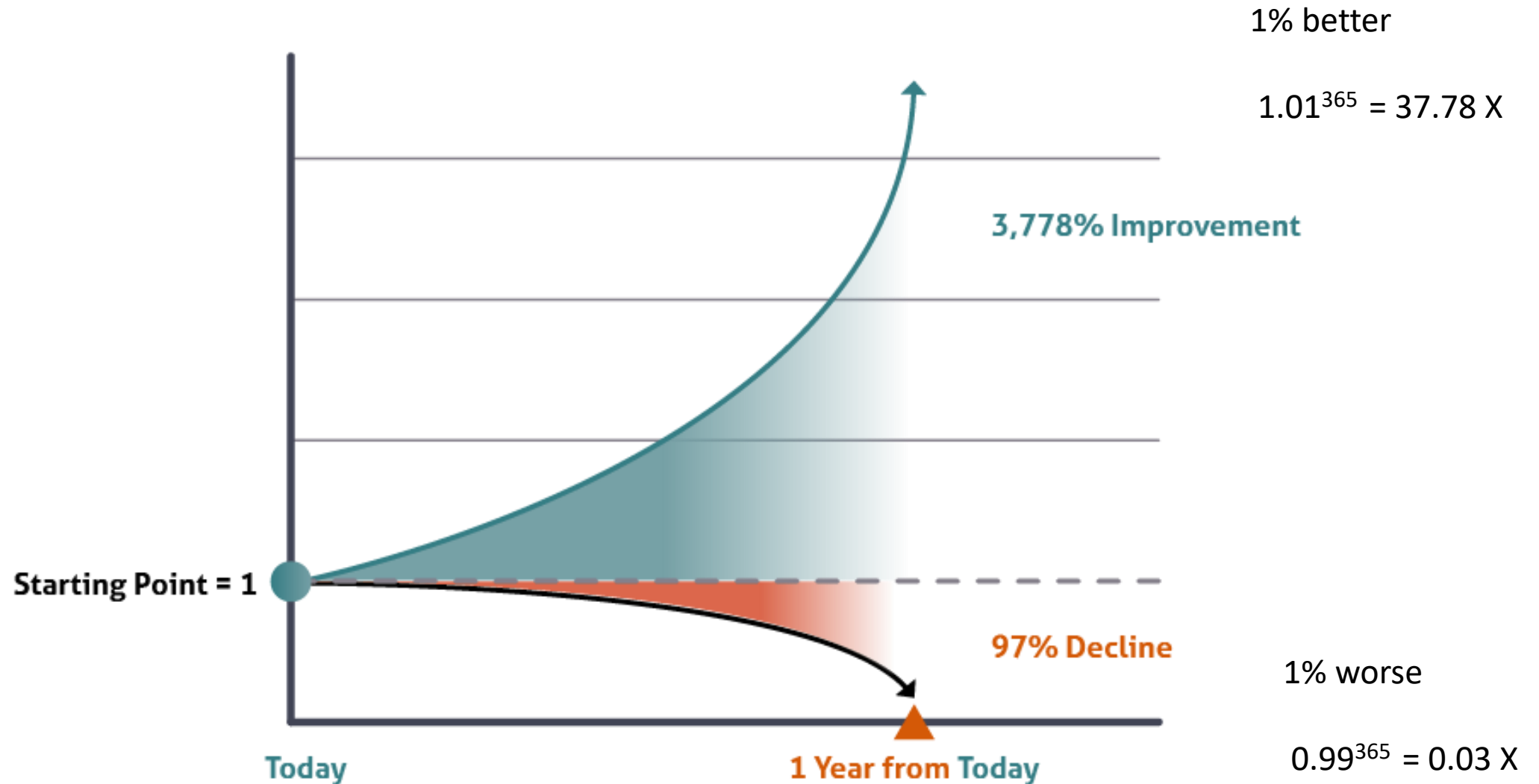




# TRANSFORMATION cannot exist independent of TRANSACTION

Transformational Leader		Transactional Leader
Creates vision		Agrees objectives
Inspires		Motivates
Empowers		Bargains/Negotiates
Takes risks		Promote security
Disrupts		Stabilises
Communicates		Communicates

# Progress = The Aggregation of Marginal Gains



Leadership is as an improvisational practice of influencing others in a manner that enhances their contribution to the realization of group goals.

- leaders need to be seen as one of us - use "we" and "us" not "I" or "me".
- leaders need to be in-group champions - they must be seen to act in the collective interest.
- leaders need to be skilled entrepreneurs of identity - their skill lies in articulating their ideas as the expression of who/where we are and what/where we want to be.
- leaders need to be embedders of identity - not only telling us who we are but also shaping a world in which our sense of who we are can be made to matter.



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## Ask better questions – set better goals

- Not “what type of leadership do we want?” but
  - “what do we want our leaders to do?”
- Not “you will learn project management?” but
  - “demonstrate how you will use the project management skills you have learned?”



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# Wicked problems and systems improvement

*The problem space continues to evolve as you work in the solution space*

- Population growth ✓
- Food Supply ✓
- Climate Change ✗
- Aging Population – except in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Equity, diversity. Nutrition Security
- ?????



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# Re-thinking Partnerships

1. Greater hospitality for 1<sup>st</sup> principles
2. Understand models as tools not prescriptions
  - Ask better questions
  - Look for the emergent data and under-reported outcomes
3. Embed individual and relationship training IN research projects
4. We are all leaders – embrace the situation you are in and change it
  - Consider disrupting yourself as a leader



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***Doing well by doing good***

➤ ***Doing better by doing different***



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