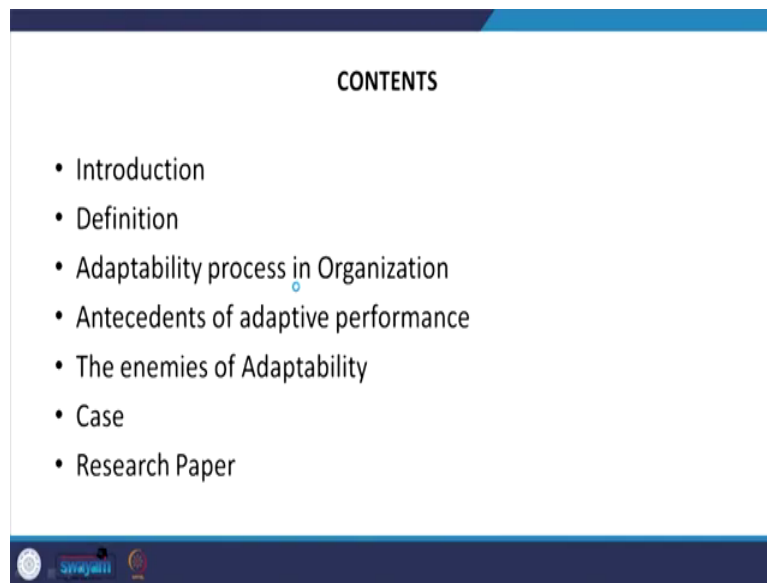


**Managerial Skills for Interpersonal Dynamics**  
**Professor Santosh Rangnekar**  
**Department of Management Studies**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee**  
**Lecture 28**  
**Adaptability 1**

In this session we will talk about the another very, very important dimension in interpersonal relationship is, and that is the adaptability, whatever the adaptability and how we understand this concept.

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**CONTENTS**

- Introduction
- Definition
- Adaptability process in Organization
- Antecedents of adaptive performance
- The enemies of Adaptability
- Case
- Research Paper

In the beginning I will talk about the introduction of the adaptability, then definition of the adaptability, then adaptability process in organization how they are adaptable, antecedents of the adaptive performance, the enemies of adaptability, the case studies and the research paper.

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**INTRODUCTION**

- Today's organizations are characterized by changing, dynamic environments in which the need for adaptive workers has become increasingly important (Edwards & Morrison, 1994).
- Changing technologies and automation continue to alter the nature of work tasks, requiring employees to learn new ways to perform their jobs.
- Mergers, "rightsizing," and corporate restructuring also require individuals to learn new skills to be competitive for different jobs.
- many jobs require individuals to learn to operate effectively in a variety of different countries and with individuals who possess different values and orientations than themselves (Black, 1990; Noe & Ford, 1992).
- Workers need to be increasingly adaptable, versatile, and tolerant of uncertainty to operate effectively in these changing and varied environments. n & Pulakos, 1999; Smith, Ford, & Kozlowski, 1997).

*SPELT*  
*Social*  
*Political*  
*Legal*  
*Economic*  
*Technological*

So, when we are talking about the today's organizations so they keep on changing. As we see there are the so many challenges are there because we are having the all different challenges in the organizations that is including the social aspect is changing.

Then the political aspects are also changing in the organizations and in the surroundings, then legal change, then the economic changes and then technological changes. So, therefore, in that case when we are talking about the changes it becomes the social, political, economical, legal and technological. This is also called the SPELT.

If we are changing all these, the business environment and naturally the organizations they are required to work in this dynamic environment and then it becomes very, very important that is the, there is a need for the adaptive workers has become increasingly important.

So, therefore, in that case because of these changes in the social norms, values, economic situations are changing and we all of us are looking technological changes very fast so as a result of which if an organization wants to sustainable so for sustainability it becomes very very important that you are adaptive.

And if you are not adaptive then in that case, there will be resistance to change. And if there will be resistance to change then sustainability will be in the question. So, it becomes important that is the organizations, they require the workers who are adaptive.

Changing technologies and automations continue to alter the nature of work task. As we have seen, I would like to share my example of my visit to the Hyundai plant, Ulsan plant at South

Korea. And there I found that is the almost 80 percent to 90 percent of the work is done by the automation. Very less number of the workers are there and robots are more as a result of which we find, that is this technology and automation is becoming the continue to alter the nature of the workplace also.

And then in that case whoever the employees those who are working they require to learn new ways to perform their jobs and in that case it becomes very, very important because the job description, job specifications, they are also keep on changing and therefore there is a need for this particular adaption of the new technology.

The nature of jobs are changing. Whatever job we are doing today, after 5 years the nature of job will totally change with the change into the technology. Then definitely it becomes very, very important that is the, we have to learn new ways to perform their jobs. Mergers, rightsizing and the corporate restructuring also require individuals to learn new skills to be competitive for the different jobs.

Now, when we are talking about the mergers the major issue is of the culture. And if there are the two organizations which are going for the process of merger then definitely in that case it becomes important that is they learn the culture of the another organization, the practices of the another organization. So, one organization has to learn the practices of the another organization. Only in that case we will find that is they are able to be sustain.

So, therefore, in that case these mergers and rightsizing, that is becoming a very, very important key issue in case of the adaptability. Many jobs require individuals to learn to operate effectively in a variety of different countries, and naturally we see nowadays it is becoming the, business is becoming the global village and the global village is continuing then we have two variety of the different countries.

We have to learn the work from those countries, and with individuals who possess different values and orientations. So, that is required to be the different values and orientations than themselves, and therefore in that case it becomes very, very important is, that is the, what is the outcome in the case when we are having the adaptability and when we have the adaptability the outcome will be we will be able to work in the different countries.

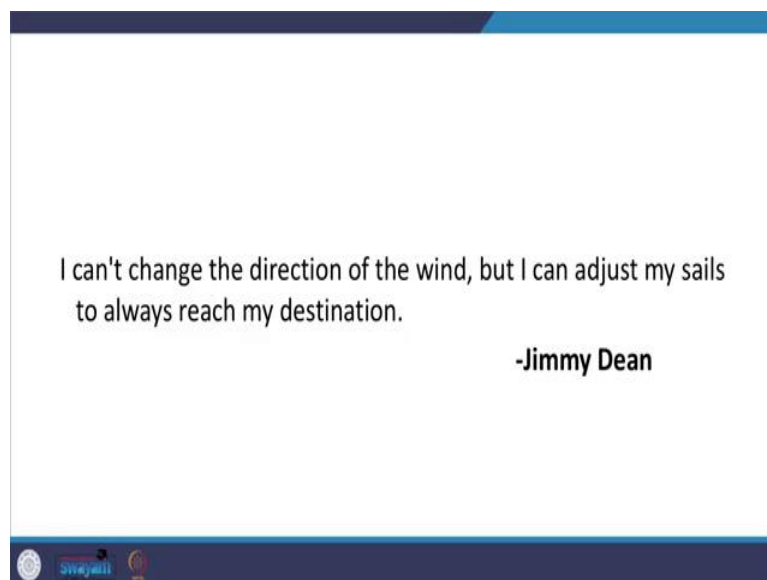
Then we talk about the different values and orientation of the individuals and when they are going to work into the another country then they have to be adaptable. Now, that adaptability, how to develop that we will see with the further discussions in this session but if basically if

they are not adaptable in nature, if they are not adaptive in nature then in that case it will be very difficult for them to work into the different countries.

Workers need to be increasingly adaptable, versatile and tolerant of uncertainty to operate effectively in this changing and varied environment. So, therefore, their learning ability, that becomes very, very important. If their learning ability is becoming strong then definitely they should go for the progressive approach.

But if in that case if the worker is not adaptable and versatile and in the period of the 30 years or 40 years of their work life, if they are not ready for the uncertainty then it will be very difficult for them to operate effectively in this changing and varied environment is there.

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So, a very famous quote is here. I cannot change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination. And therefore, here what knowledge and skills you are having, that you have adapt as per the changing in the technology, changing into the social environment, changing into the legal aspects, changing into the political aspects and therefore in that case, what is required?

The orientation to change is required, and not to the resistance to change. If there will be resistance to change then definitely in that case the people will not be ready to direct their journey towards the success. If we want to direct our journey towards the success it becomes very, very important that we develop our competency.

Our competency has to be developed according to the need of time. And currently when are talking of artificial intelligence, when we are talking about the IOT and the employees those who are working and the aspects which are going to change then definitely our competency, our competency has to be matched with the time, with the time, the requirement and the requirement is, requirement of the skills is that is the, there is a need to develop your, first change your attitude and develop your knowledge and skills according to the need of the time. Now, we will refer certain definitions on the adaptability.

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DEFINITIONS	
Author/Sources	Definition
Pulakos et al.	"Ability to modify their behavior to meet the demands of a new situation or event or a changed environment", also referred to as adaptive performance.
OXFORD Dictionary	Adaptability is the quality of being able to adjust to new conditions. The capacity to be modified for a new use or purpose.
Stephen Hawking	Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change.
Andrew J. Martin	'Adaptability' is formally defined as the capacity to adaptively regulate cognition, emotion, and behavior in response to new, changing, and/or challenging conditions and circumstances.
Andersen and Gronau	Adaptability in the field of organizational management can in general be seen as an ability to change something or oneself to fit to occurring changes.

For example, Pulakos et al, they have talked about ability to modify their behavior to meet the demands of the new situation or event or a changed environment, also referred to as adaptive performance.

Naturally when we are supposed to work in a changing environment then definitely we have to change or modify our behavior. For example, if we are working into the highly skilled people then definitely our approach is to be, to work in that particular organization by modifying our behavior and interact. Many times leader fails; leader fails at the top positions, chairman and CEO position because they are not able to modify their behavior as nature of organization changes.

Suppose somebody is working into the manufacturing industry and when he is shifted to a service industry then his leadership style and then his behavior that is required to be changed, because the men power, his followers in the manufacturing industries were different as compared to the service industries and therefore it is becoming very, very important, that is if

you do not modify the shift from the manufacturing industries to the service industries then definitely, if you change, you modify your behavior you will be successful as a leader.

But if you do not change or modify your behavior then it will be very difficult for you to make the successful leadership because when you are interacting with a particular mob or a particular class then the maturity level, the understanding, the competency level will change. It can be high, it can be low.

If you are interacting with the high competent people as compared to previous your experience then definitely you have to modify your behavior. So, please try to learn, that is the who are my followers and if these are the followers then what type of the interaction will be more suitable for them and therefore you have to modify your behavior, and if you are able to modify your behavior then definitely you are a successful manager.

Oxford Dictionary has given the definition. Adaptability is the quality of being able to adjust to new conditions. The capacity to be modified for a new use or purpose. So, second sentence is the more or less similar to the earlier one, that is Pulakos et al, the definition but that adjustment, the quality of being able to adjust to new conditions.

And therefore, in that case the personality, the personality is required to be developed in such a way so that even if the new conditions are there the person is so flexible, he is able to cope up with the new situation. To cope up with the new situation definitely he will require certain mechanism and tools.

In Stephen Hawking's definition, intelligence is the ability to adapt to change. A person will be called as smart, intelligent as soon as, if the leader changes, your boss changes, and the new boss comes so how do you continue with that new boss? Are you able to cope up with this change and then again tune up yourself as per the new boss demands or you are into the past world and therefore you are remembering your old boss and then you are not ready to change your behavior as per the demand of the new boss then definitely it will be very difficult to be successful.

Now, here I would also like to mention. You might have one question. So, does it mean that I have to change my loyalty also? Now, please understand that is your loyalty is towards your organization, not towards your boss. And when you are loyal to your organization, automatically you are creating; it is a subset, of loyalty to your boss.

But your focus is different. Your focus is not to please your boss. Your focus is to satisfy the organization's expectations. So, your canvas is much wider. And in the wider canvas when you are painting so definitely the corner of the canvas is also covered, or center of the canvas you can say if you want to say the boss is into the center, it is the center of the canvas.

So, therefore, that intelligence is required and as I mentioned, it is not against the loyalty because the overall objective is same. You are not changing your overall objective because you are doing, working for what? You are working for the betterment of the organization. If you are working for the betterment of the organization you will be able to make that intelligence ability to adapt to change.

Andrew J. Martin talks about adaptability is formally defined as the capacity to adaptively regulate the conditions. So, therefore, if you are having that ability to making the adaptively regulate the cognition then you will be able to make the better emotions, behaviors in response to new, changing and also challenging conditions and circumstances.

I will be also discussing the different emotions further because in the interpersonal relationship your emotions control, that is emotional intelligence and emotional quotient, that becomes very, very important and if you are smart enough to carry the emotional intelligence then definitely in that case you will be able to respond, not react, you will be able to respond to the changing environment very intelligently.

So, therefore, in response to new changing and challenging conditions and circumstances adaptability is becoming a very, very important role and there is required a capacity to make the adaptive regular cognitions.

Next definition is given by the Andersen and Gronau. Anderson and Gronau have given the definition, adaptability in the field of organizational management can in general be seen as an ability to change something or one set to fit the occurring changes. So, it is a matching, matching with the changes, matching with the organizations.

If you are able to match with the changes and able to match with the organizations then definitely you will be able to be successful in this particular, in the particular demand or requirement or the changed environment because you are able to cope up with your emotions, with your behavior, with your intelligence. So, these are becoming very, very important, your emotions, behavior and then intelligence, ability to adjust and ability to modify.


So, therefore, these person's ability, ability to modify, ability to adjust, intelligence, ability to adapt and controlling of the emotions and behavior and then ability to change then definitely in that case your adaptability on these dimensions will be very, very important. Now, we will see that is the how the adaptability process in the organization.

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**ADAPTABILITY PROCESS IN ORGANIZATION**

According to Centre for Creative Leadership Adaptability can be achieved in three steps:

Adaptability: 1 Idea, 3 Facts, 5 Tips



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According to Centre for Creative Leadership Adaptability can be achieved in three steps. First and foremost is the idea, that is the how is your idea? What is your idea? And then 1 idea, 3 facts and the 5 tips that we will be discussing. So, what it means in the idea?

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**1 IDEA**

- Change is constant and inevitable. Leaders all over the world are facing change and complexity — new cultures, new jobs, new markets, new everything.
- Research conducted by CCL has confirmed this imperative to adapt. According to the research, the most frequently cited success factor for North American managers was the ability to develop or adapt. Conversely, the inability to develop or adapt was the most frequently cited reason for career derailment among North American managers.

*Paradoxical → Authentic*  
*⑤*



Change is constant and inevitable “Parivartan Sansaar Ka Niyyam Hain”. So, therefore, it is always a constant. Leaders all over the world are facing change and the complexity. So, naturally when we are talking about the change then it will have the complexity of the new culture, new jobs, new markets and new everything.

So, therefore, in that case it becomes very, very important that is the, which type of culture you are into. If you are in the autocratic culture, you are from the participative, from the participative and you are going towards the autocratic; so you have spent the 5 years in participative style of leadership and now you have entered into the autocratic style of leadership then in that case what are ability to change, ability to modify, ability to adapt, work intelligently, all these will be requiring, totally a new culture will be there.

The functioning style will be totally new and therefore and naturally you have changed and the progressive step and therefore a higher position and therefore you are having the new jobs. And your location has been changed; the responsibilities of the markets have been changed so you will have the new markets.

So, we have to understand, and it is a part of life, it has to, like our age changes, so from childhood to adolescent, adolescent to the adult, adult to the young age, young age to the middle age, middle age to the old age, right and then the senior age more than the 70, your age between 60 to 75 and 75 onwards, so every 5 years you will find there is a change. And if there is a change so definitely you are required that is the, you have to be the, you have to understand what are the changes are there and with these changes how can I become enough competitive? I will not use the word the better competitive but definitely the enough competitive because then you will be sustainable in the beginning.

So, if you are going for this particular new culture, new jobs, new markets, new everything and then in that case, research conducted by CCL has confirmed this imperative to adapt. So, unless and until there is not the perfection in the adaption the person will not be able to even survive.

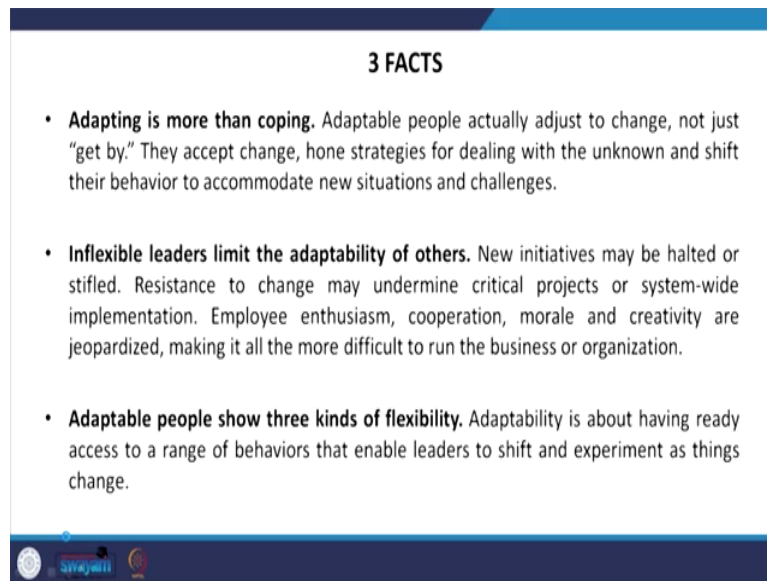
According to the research, the most frequently cited success factor for North American managers was the ability to develop or adapt. Therefore, it has been, the research it has been found that is the North American managers where the ability to develop, adapt.

Conversely, the inability to develop or adapt was the most frequently cited reason for career derailment among North American managers. But this is also another fact which is becoming

very important, that is the, but, in the case if they are not having the ability to adapt in the different place then they are becoming, that is the, their inability to adapt is making them the derailment that is their progress, the growth, the speed, that is not remaining the same.

So, therefore, it becomes important, that is the whenever we are talking about the generation of ideas it becomes very, very important. So, now the 3 facts, what are these 3 facts?

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**3 FACTS**

- **Adapting is more than coping.** Adaptable people actually adjust to change, not just “get by.” They accept change, hone strategies for dealing with the unknown and shift their behavior to accommodate new situations and challenges.
- **Inflexible leaders limit the adaptability of others.** New initiatives may be halted or stifled. Resistance to change may undermine critical projects or system-wide implementation. Employee enthusiasm, cooperation, morale and creativity are jeopardized, making it all the more difficult to run the business or organization.
- **Adaptable people show three kinds of flexibility.** Adaptability is about having ready access to a range of behaviors that enable leaders to shift and experiment as things change.

Adapting is more than coping. How? Adaptable people actually adjust to change not just “get by.” They accept change, hone strategies for dealing with the unknown and shift their behavior to accommodate new situation and challenges.

So, therefore, the adaptability is more progressive and more positive, and it is becoming more progressive and more positive because there has been, so they are not just only to adjust the change. Coping means that is the okay, I have to work in this organization. Otherwise where I will go? So, I am trying to adjust with my boss.

So, adaptability is not only adjustment, it is beyond adjustment. So, ability to adjust and then making the strategies for the growth and therefore we will find that is the adapting is much more than the coping is there.

Inflexible leaders limit the adaptability of others. New initiatives may be halted or stifled. Resistance to change may undermine critical projects or system-wide implementation. Employee enthusiasm, cooperation, morale and creativity are jeopardized, making it all the more difficult to run the business or organization.

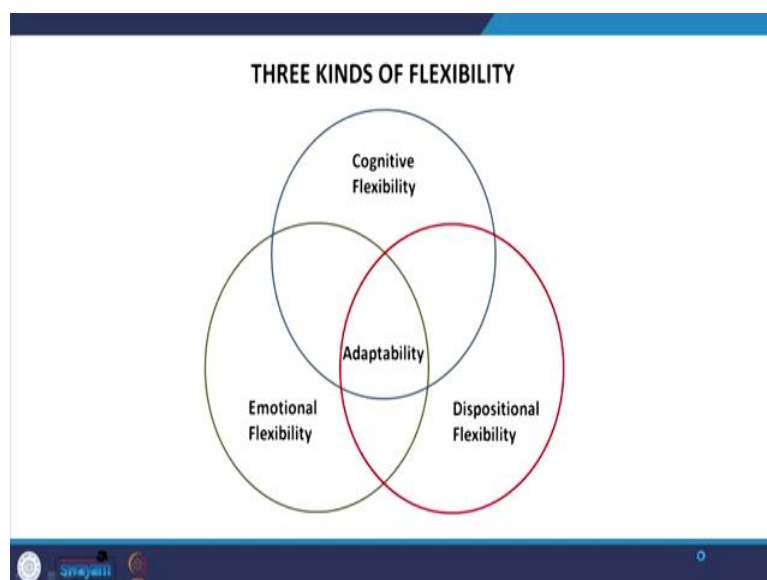
So, if we see the decision-making style of the inflexible leaders, the decision-making style of the inflexible leaders is that is not to cope up with the situation and not to make the strategies for the future challenges. As a result of which what is happening is there will be resistance to change, and may undermine critical projects.

So, because if you are going for the any particular development then definitely you will undermine yourself because inflexible leaders, they do not welcome the new initiatives and as a result of which there will be no creativity, and then the employee enthusiasm, because employee will not be enthusiastic to do new things because their leader is stopping them; that do not and as a result of which you will find that is the, it becomes very difficult to run in a business and organization where people have the mindset not to change.

In many organizations especially the large enterprises, leaders are unable to make these changes because of their, the people either their own inflexible leadership style or the inflexibility or inadaptability of the workers and employees.

Adaptable people show three kinds of flexibility, is about having ready access to a range of behaviors that enables leader to shift and experiment as things change. And when we are talking of the adaptability, and therefore they are having the different types of the flexibility is there.

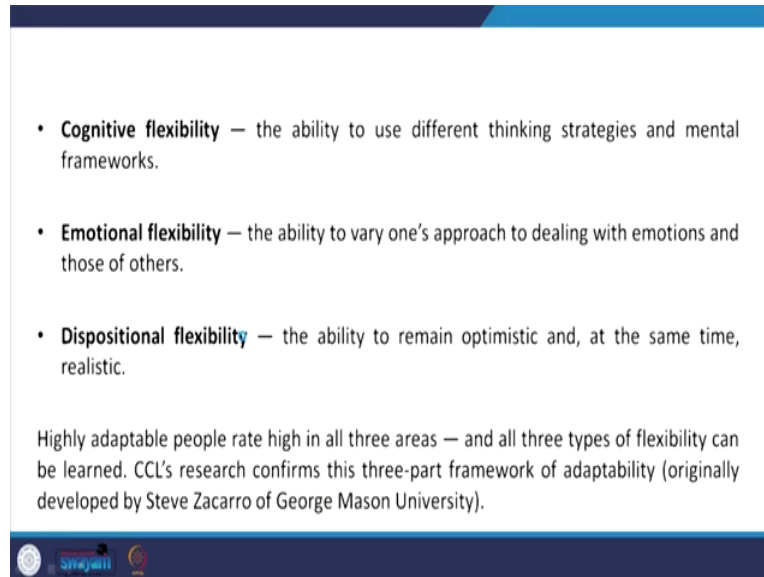
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So, first and foremost is the cognitive flexibility and there, in that case we will find that is the cognitive flexibility making them the more adaptable employees or managers. Second adaptability is the dispositional flexibility and therefore in that case also it will affect the

adaptability. And third will be the emotional flexibility and in that case it becomes very, very important that is we are becoming the more emotionally flexible and see its impact on the adaptability.

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• **Cognitive flexibility** — the ability to use different thinking strategies and mental frameworks.

• **Emotional flexibility** — the ability to vary one's approach to dealing with emotions and those of others.

• **Dispositional flexibility** — the ability to remain optimistic and, at the same time, realistic.

Highly adaptable people rate high in all three areas — and all three types of flexibility can be learned. CCL's research confirms this three-part framework of adaptability (originally developed by Steve Zacarro of George Mason University).

The cognitive flexibility, the ability to use different thinking strategies and mental frameworks, so if we are having this particular ability to have a think-tank, these different strategies and then we are able to develop a mental framework. If we are able to develop a mental framework then it will become more and more successful.

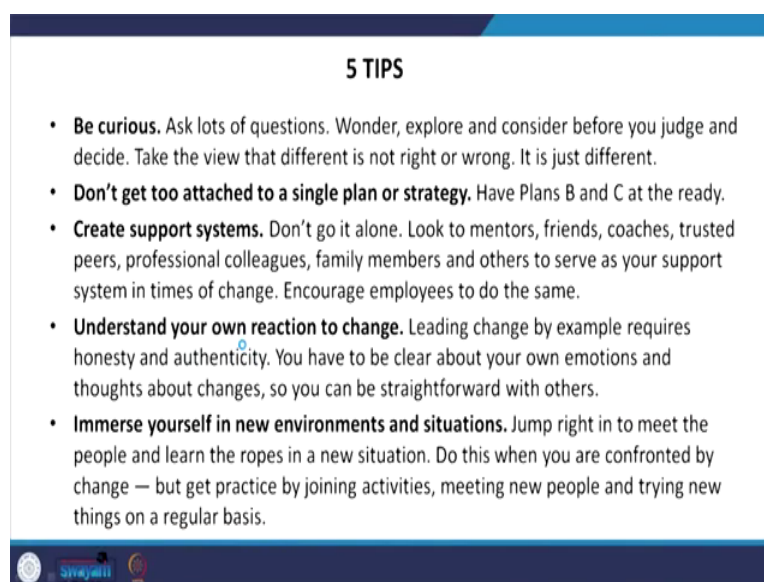
Emotional flexibility will be the ability to vary one's approach to dealing with emotions and those of others. So, naturally when we are working in organization we are working with the people and the group and then in that case we have to understand that is the, how to deal the emotions of others also. It is not only the questions what emotions do I have but I should have an ability to make the dealing and respond to my employees emotionally in the same way they are looking for.

So, it becomes very important that is the, how you are able to deal with the emotions; and the dispositional flexibility, I have talked about the optimism. The ability to remain optimistic and at the same time, realistic. So, whenever we are designing the goal so goal should be realistic, approachable and flexible; because with the change in the environment and the time period it becomes very, very important that we are making the change into this particular requirement of the adaption.

Highly adaptable people rate high in all three areas and all three types of flexibility can be learnt. So, it becomes very, very important that is the how we are becoming the adaptable in this case, and if in these three areas if the three types of flexibility we can learn, that is the cognitive flexibility, the ability to use different thinking strategies and mental frameworks. Emotional flexibility will be the ability to vary one's approach and in the dealing and then the dispositional flexibility remaining the optimistic and the realistic at the same time.

So, if you are having these all three flexibility we learn then the CCL's research confirms that these three part framework of adaptability originally developed by Steve Zaccaro of the George Mason University and if we are able to develop these all the three flexibility we will be successful. Finally I will come to the 5 tips. First is, to be adaptable the first and making the, your flexibility with the adaptability it becomes.

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**5 TIPS**

- **Be curious.** Ask lots of questions. Wonder, explore and consider before you judge and decide. Take the view that different is not right or wrong. It is just different.
- **Don't get too attached to a single plan or strategy.** Have Plans B and C at the ready.
- **Create support systems.** Don't go it alone. Look to mentors, friends, coaches, trusted peers, professional colleagues, family members and others to serve as your support system in times of change. Encourage employees to do the same.
- **Understand your own reaction to change.** Leading change by example requires honesty and authenticity. You have to be clear about your own emotions and thoughts about changes, so you can be straightforward with others.
- **Immerse yourself in new environments and situations.** Jump right in to meet the people and learn the ropes in a new situation. Do this when you are confronted by change — but get practice by joining activities, meeting new people and trying new things on a regular basis.

First is, that is be curious. Ask lot of questions, wonder, explore and consider before you judge and decide. So, whenever you are having the, or exploring the research and you are curious and explore more and more then definitely you will be able to make the right decision. Take the view that different is not right or wrong, it is just different. So, many times when we compare the two decisions, so it is not that the any one decision is wrong decision.

No, one decision is more beneficial as compared to another decision. Or one decision is more matching or relevant to the situation as compared to the another decision. But another decision is not wrong. So, do not get too attached to a single plan or strategy. Have a Plan B

and C at the ready. So, when you are having the different plans so you will be definitely, if this is not working, okay I will shift to B. If B is not working, I will shift to C.

Create support systems, do not go it alone. So, whatever change you want to bring, you please do not bring it alone. Look to mentors, friends, coaches, trusted peers, professional colleagues, family members and others.

So, naturally whatever decision or the change you want to bring, please talk to the all these stakeholders like the, when you are talking about the friends, coaches, peers, professional colleagues, mentors and then definitely family members then definitely that will help you to support your system in times of change because in the time of the change you require a very strong support system, and this support system will work; and encourage employees to do the same.

Understand your own reaction to change. Leading change by example requires honesty and authenticity. We have to be clear about our own emotions and thoughts about changes. Or we can be straight forward with others. And therefore, please understand that is, your firmness or your understanding that is, yes, I can and I can do and therefore you have to understand your reaction to change.

And finally, immerse yourself in new environments and situations and in that case, it is the jump right in to the meet the people and learn the ropes in a new situation. So, find out who are the people and who can support you and make a relationship, understand, make the mentors, learn from them. Do this when you are confronted by the change and especially when you find that is the change is not smooth.

But get practice by joining activities, meeting new people and trying new things on a regular basis. So, therefore always try to do the new things and be more and more adaptable in the given new culture, in new jobs, new your own goal or new environment. So, this is all about that is the, what is adaptability and how we can be adaptable. Thank you.