

“Could it be that . . . ?”

A Peer-to-Peer Consultation Exercise

Leadership Challenge Instructions

In preparation for your Peer-to-Peer Consultation Session, you will write about an important leadership challenge you are currently facing in your work. Choose a challenge that is pressing and one you are willing to describe and discuss openly with colleagues who will receive your leadership challenge in advance. Confidentiality is the norm, and Chatham House rules apply.ⁱ

During the session, you will discuss your challenge in small peer-to-peer consultation groups and receive feedback from colleagues. In turn, you will provide feedback on your colleagues’ challenges.

Purpose

- to pause, reflect, and apply new strategies to something concrete in your own work context
- to learn from your peers and receive specific feedback based on their experiences and insights
- to strengthen your diagnostic and coaching skills by helping your peers probe their problem, challenge assumptions, and identify action alternatives by asking constructive questions; this will not only benefit the presenter, it will help you apply concepts and sharpen your analytic skills

Directions

Your written description should be brief—about half a page. The challenge should involve:

- you as a leader. It must be a situation where you can directly or indirectly make a difference. Be clear what your role is or could be in this particular situation.
- a goal or aspiration to improve your organization itself and/or improve the quality of life for the community your organization serves. This could be anything from a mayoral priority you are working on, to an organizational change effort, to a hope for better team performance.
- a problem, obstacle, or dilemma: What makes it a challenge? What puzzles you? What is the most important question you have been asking yourself concerning your role in addressing the problem?

Without revealing the identities of the participants or agencies involved in your challenge, provide enough detail that others can meaningfully discuss the challenge with you.

Please submit your leadership challenge by the provided deadline so that peers have time to read and reflect on it before the session. Don’t overthink or spend too time writing up your challenge. It doesn’t have to be perfect, and your perspective on it will likely change. Enjoy the opportunity to reflect on something you care about and to benefit from the wisdom of your peers!

ⁱ Chatham House Rules permit participants to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the participant that provided that information may be revealed.