

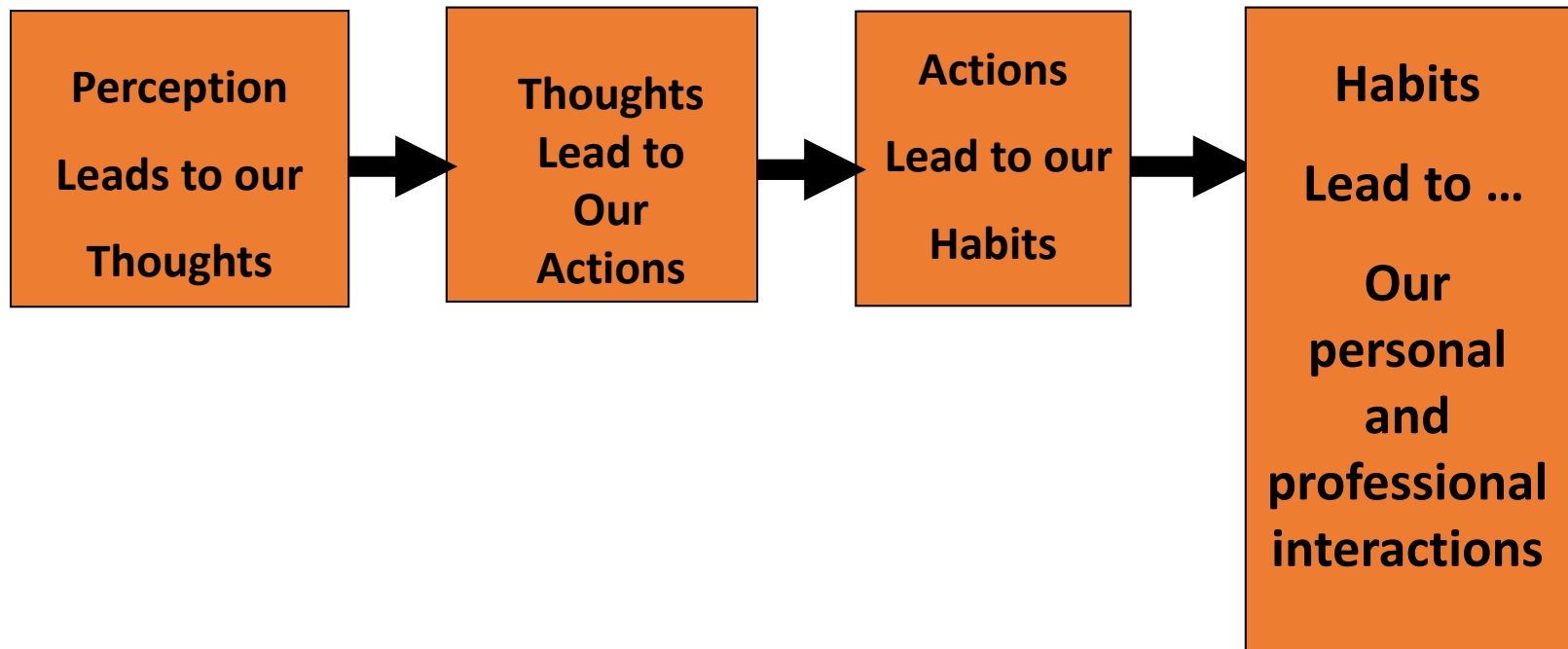


Best Practice:
The Power of
Reframing Remote
Work For Effective
Leadership

Matthew Sowcik
University of Florida
sowcik@ufl.edu
570-793-0039



Perception

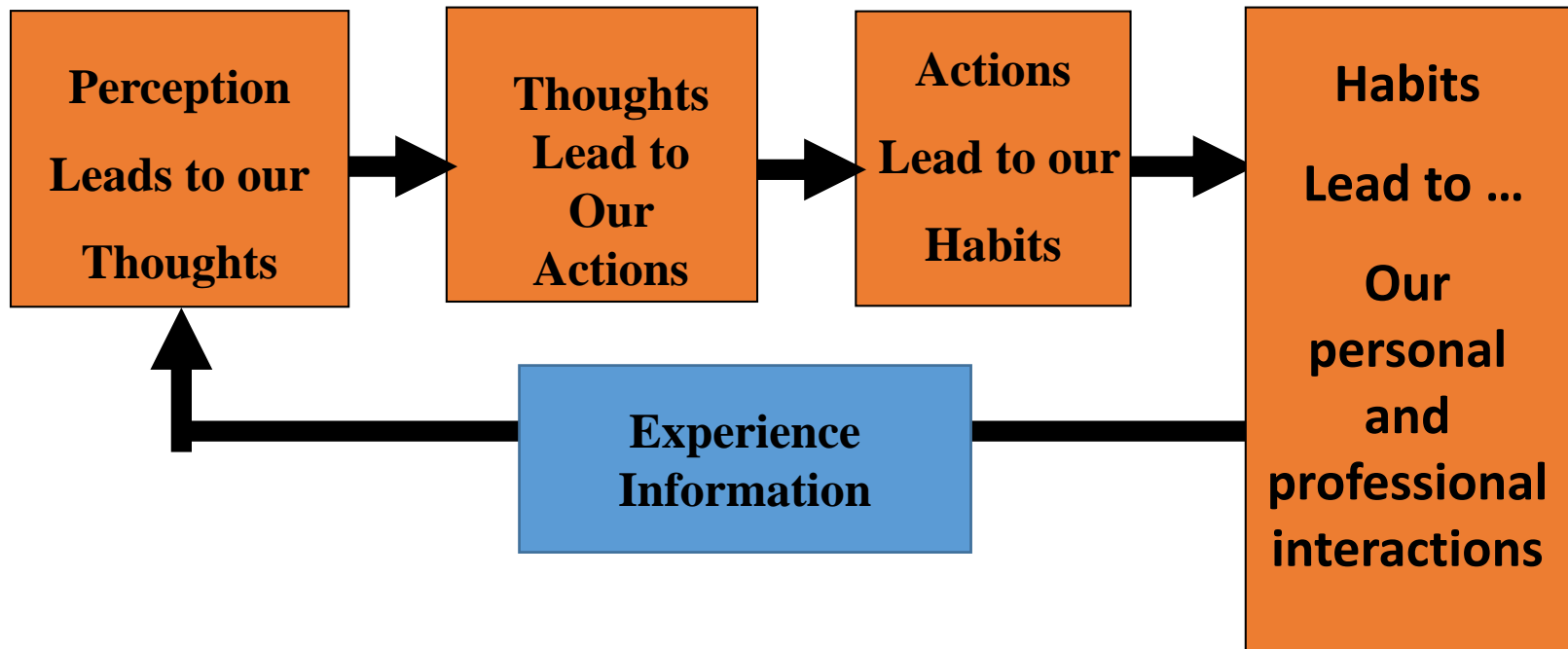








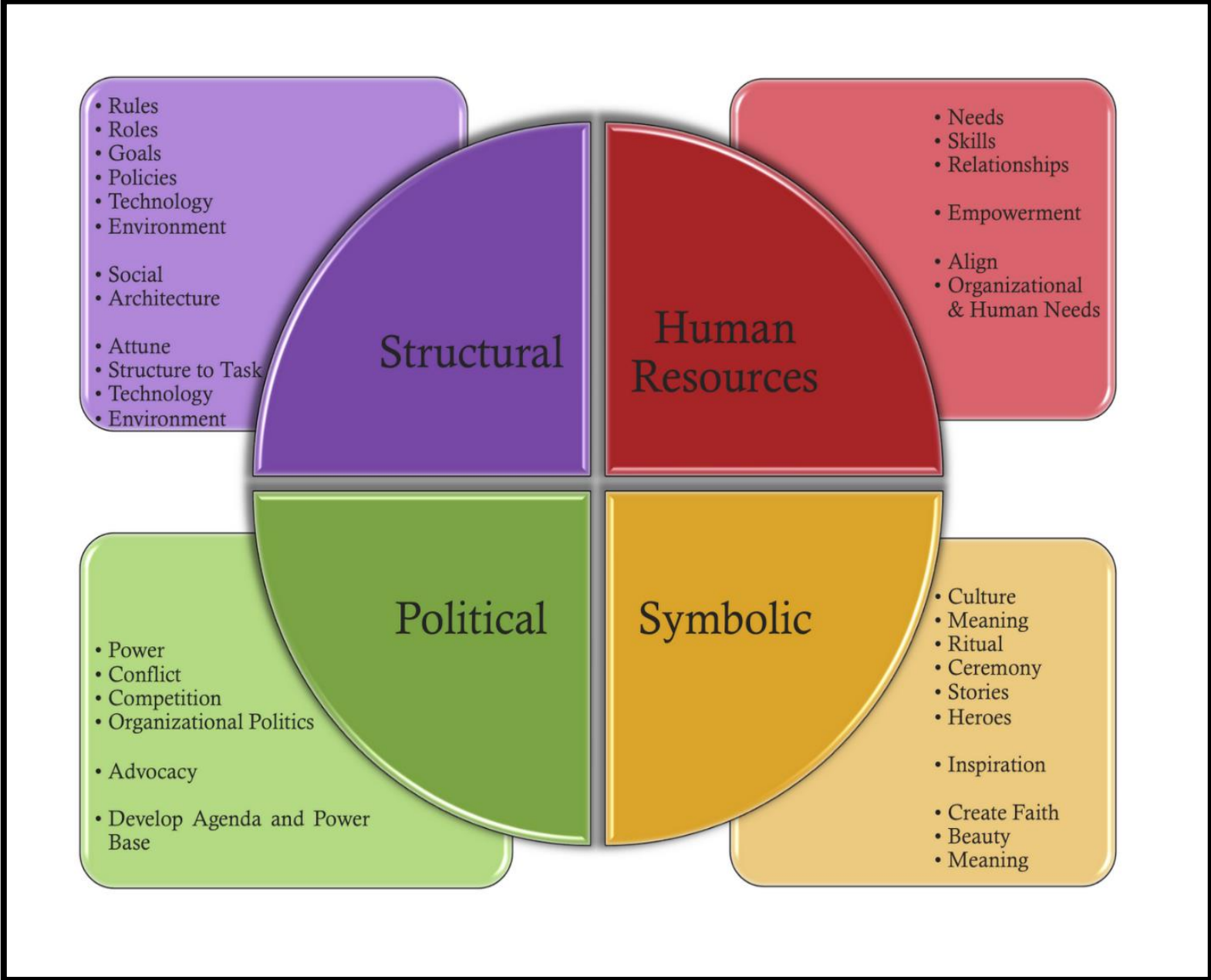
Perception



Both Good and Bad

- Helps us know how to act in traditional situations
- Is impacted by:
 - Optimism Bias and Over confidence
 - Functional Fixedness

The Frames?



The Structural Frame

The Structural Frame emphasizes:

- Goals, specialized roles, and formalized relationships.
- Specifically, this frame focuses on the division of labor, rules, policies, procedures and hierarchies that are currently established in the environment.

Problems:

- When the current “structure” established in the group or organization does not fit within the current environment.

The Structural Frame

When the leader is able to observe an issue through the structural frame:

- Carefully study the existing structure to understand how the structure works (or does not work) – redesign if nec.
- Redefine new goals and strategies for moving forward
- Proactively change in response to changing goals, technology and external demands
- Increase communication effectiveness

**So What Elements of Leading
Remote Teams/Employees
Needs to be Considered by
Utilizing the Structural Frame?**

Structural Frame

- **Initial Boundaries and Guideline**

- Alleviate anxiety
- Prevent burnout

- **Clear Goals**

- Performance can't be based on how long they are in the office or how much they get done day-to-day. Instead focus on clear goals, with clear outcomes, and clear timelines to measure what is actually accomplished.

- **Communication Effectively**

- Study by HBR found 46% of remote workers said the best managers were those who “checked in frequently and regularly.”

- **Address Technology:**

- Keep it simple then add on

The Human Resource Frame

The Human Resource Frame emphasizes:

- The role individuals play in getting the work done while feeling good about themselves, the organization and their work
- Specifically, this frame focuses on individual needs, feelings, prejudices, skills, and limitations

Problems:

- Arise when an individual or a group of individuals are unsatisfied and actively disengaged with their work

The Human Resource Frame

When the leader is able to observe an issue through the Human Resource Frame:

- Identify and address those areas that are not a good fit between the individual and the organization.
- Recognize and keep talented individuals who work well in the organizational culture.
- Promote and reward individuals to encourage motivation.
- Empower others by providing an environment of job enrichment, teaming and diversity.

Human Resource Frame

- **Focus on Connectedness**

- easy to become to task focused in the current situation
- critical to make time to continue to build connections between everyone in the department or organization

- **Training and Development**

- Technology
- Professional Development

- **Communicating Effectively**

- The more you are able to meet employees where they are at with their preferred communication style, the more likely they will feel supported.

The Symbolic Frame

The Symbolic Frame recognizes:

- Culture is the glue that holds a business together, unites people, and ultimately helps the leader accomplish their goals
- Stories, myths, rituals, ceremonies, history and symbols like vision, mission and values are the driving forces behind the culture

Problems:

- Are often associated with leaders not living up to those symbols that are communicated as important (i.e. the organizational values)

The Symbolic Frame

When the leader is able to observe an issue through the Symbolic Frame:

- Explore further the mission, vision and values
- Respect and use the rich history of the business or individual. What has happened in the past that, if communicated effectively, can help communicate positive growth and change
- Develop and tell stories that easily communicate the symbols that are important to the individual or organization.
- Create programs that reward those who live the culture
- Lead by example and practice what you preach

**So What Elements of Leading
Remote Teams/Employees
Needs to be Considered by
Utilizing the Symbolic Frame?**

Symbolic Frame

- **Mission, Vision and Values**

- Now is the time to use these statements of belief to guide both your culture and your decision making process. Draw attention to these predetermined commitments during these tumultuous times.

- **Foster a Culture of Interconnectedness**

- Setting up some digital space for employees to catch up, chat, celebrate accomplishments/birthdays, or just discuss weekend plans is important to provide the feeling of socializing at work.

- **Praise, Reward and Reinforce**

- Find reasons to praise and reward effective remote working behavior like completing tasks, asking questions, or contributing to an effective work culture.

The Political Frame

The Political Frame views:

- “Organizations as coalitions composed of individuals and groups with enduring differences who live in a world of scarce resources” (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 209).
- Furthermore, leadership in these coalitions looks to use power and influence to address this landscape. Effective leaders are able to use conflict, negotiation, and bargaining to achieve the groups goals.

Problems:

- When power is used unjustly or ineffectively.
- Additionally, issues may also emerge if the leader has little political awareness, which suggest they are unable to accurately read key power relationships, detect crucial social networks, or understand the forces that shape the views of key stakeholders (Goleman, 1998).

The Political Frame

When the leader is able to observe an issue through the Political Frame:

- Studies the existing structure and redraws the organizational chart to better understand the power structures in the organization (who has informal power, where coalitions exist, and how decisions are made)
- Identify how information gets communicated and how that communication brings together different coalitions within the organization
- Set the agenda for the team but remains realistic about expectations when defining goals
- Continuously builds networks and relationships with different internal and external stakeholders

Political Frame

- **Utilize Diversity**

- Your department or organization is made up individuals with different skillsets. Create a remote work environment that empowers all these unique skillsets throughout the process.

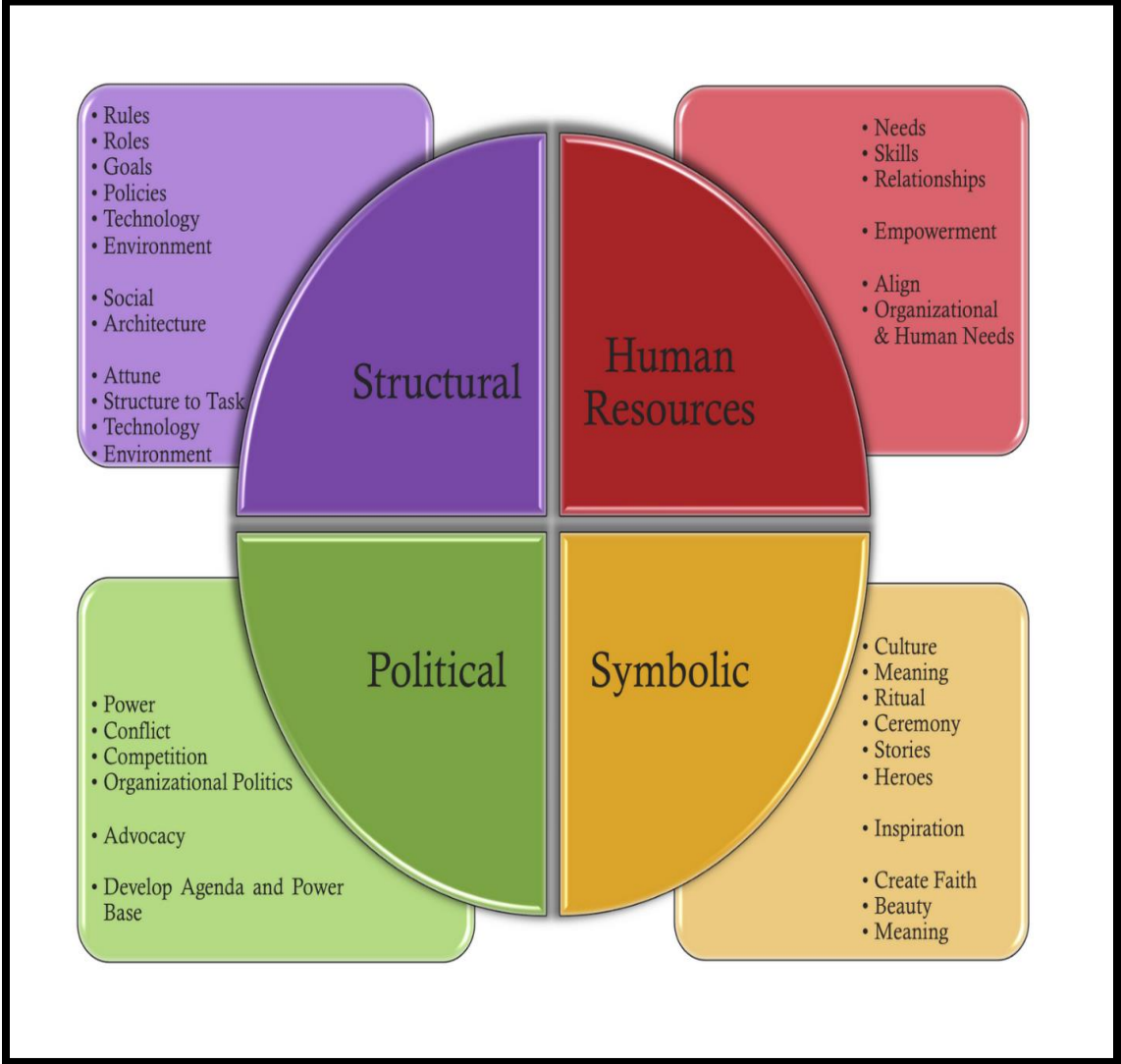
- **Check Yourself**

- It is important as the leader to check your cognitive bias. There is a tendency for leaders to provide opportunities, assign tasks and rely on employees who are similar to the leader.

- **Provide Grace**

- With the complexity and at times chaos of pandemics or disasters, let your leadership default being compassionate and providing grace.

The Frames?



Leader's Frame Preferences

- Research shows ability to use multiple frames is consistently associated with effectiveness.
- Effectiveness as *manager* – Structural frame is key
- Effectiveness as *leader* – political and symbolic frames are central
- Effectiveness as a *manager* and *leader* – Human Resources frame

Organizations as Multiple Realities

<u>Process</u>	<u>Structural</u>	<u>Human Resource</u>	<u>Political</u>	<u>Symbolic</u>
<i>Strategic planning</i>	Create strategic direction	Meeting to promote participation	Arena to air conflict	Ritual to reassure audiences
<i>Decision-making</i>	Rational process to get right answer	Open process to build commitment	Chance to gain or use power	Ritual to build values, bonding
<i>Reorganizing</i>	Improve structure/environment fit	Balance needs and tasks	Reallocate power, form new coalitions	Image of accountability, responsiveness

Organizations as Multiple Realities

<u>Process</u>	<u>Structural</u>	<u>Human Resource</u>	<u>Political</u>	<u>Symbolic</u>
<i>Evaluating</i>	Allocate rewards, control performance	Help people grow and develop	Chance to exercise power	Occasion to play roles in organizational drama
<i>Approaching conflict</i>	Authorities resolve conflict	Individuals confront conflict	Bargaining, forcing, manipulating	Develop shared values, meaning
<i>Goal setting</i>	Keep organization headed in right direction	Keep people involved and informed	Let people make their interests known	Develop symbols, shared values

Organizations as Multiple Realities

<u>Process</u>	<u>Structural</u>	<u>Human Resource</u>	<u>Political</u>	<u>Symbolic</u>
<i>Communication</i>	Transmit facts, information	Exchange information, needs, feelings	Influence or manipulate others	Tell stories
<i>Meetings</i>	Formal occasions to make decisions	Informal occasions to involve, share feelings	Competitive occasions to score points	Sacred occasions to celebrate, transform culture
<i>Motivation</i>	Economic incentives	Growth, self-actualization	Coercion, manipulation, seduction	Symbols, celebrations

Take Away

- Before any leadership opportunity go through the checklist of Frames to proactively address possibilities
- During times of conflict (or chaos) review the frames
- Stay healthy!

Sowcik@ufl.edu

