



CERTIFIED PUBLIC MANAGER - LEVEL 8/GRADUATION  
JULY 2026

# Leadership Action Plan: Lessons from the Disaster Recovery Playbook

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A breakout session connecting disaster recovery frameworks to everyday leadership challenges — and the action plans that drive both.



What do disaster recovery...  
and great leadership...  
have in common?

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An illustration of a person in a red jacket and helmet climbing a steep, grey rock face. Rain is falling diagonally across the scene. The background is a blue sky with green hills at the bottom.

## Disaster Recovery

### **Ambiguity & Rapid Change**

Constantly adapting to evolving situations with incomplete information

### **Resource Constraints**

Working with limited time, people, and resources

### **Diverse Stakeholder Needs**

Balancing competing interests and communication challenges

### **High-Stakes**

Making critical choices with significant consequences

### **Team Resilience Under Pressure**

Leading through uncertainty and maintaining performance

## Public Service Leadership

### **Complex Policy Environments**

Navigating shifting policies and competing priorities

### **Budget & Resource Management**

Managing with limited resources and competing demands

### **Cross-Functional Coordination**

Working across departments with different expertise

### **High-Visibility Decision Making**

Making important decisions under public scrutiny

### **Building Team Resilience**

Supporting staff through challenging organizational changes



# Shared Foundations

Every disaster begins with uncertainty.

Every leader eventually faces uncertainty.

Both require difficult decisions.

Both require people working together.

Both require resilience.

Both require an Action Plan.



# Today's Roadmap

Your path through today's session

1

My CPM  
Journey

2

Disaster Recovery  
Framework

3

Leadership  
Simulation

4

Team Action  
Plans

5

Lessons  
Learned





Jamesha Cox

- **CPM alumna**, earned designation in 2023
- Joined **FCPM** as an **Adjunct Instructor** in November 2025
- Professional background spanning **performance auditing, legislative affairs, program management, and oversight** within government and consulting environments
- Former **federal and state public servant** with experience at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (**HUD**) and the **State of Florida** in policy, operations, and compliance
- **Adjunct faculty member** at **The George Washington University School of Business**, teaching career strategy and professional development

# Introduction



## EDUCATION

### MASTER OF SCIENCE

Political Science  
Florida State University  
2019

### GRADUATE CERTIFICATE

Public Administration  
Florida State University  
2017

### BACHELOR OF ARTS

Political Science  
University of Central Florida  
2013

### ASSOCIATE OF ARTS

General Education  
Eastern Florida State College  
2010

## CERTIFICATIONS

- **Project Management Professional (PMP®)**, Project Management Institute, Issued: September 2025
- **Certified Public Manager (CPM®)**, Florida Center for Public Management, Florida State University, Issued: July 2023

### HIGHER EDUCATION



### PRIVATE SECTOR / CONSULTING



### FEDERAL GOVERNMENT



### STATE GOVERNMENT

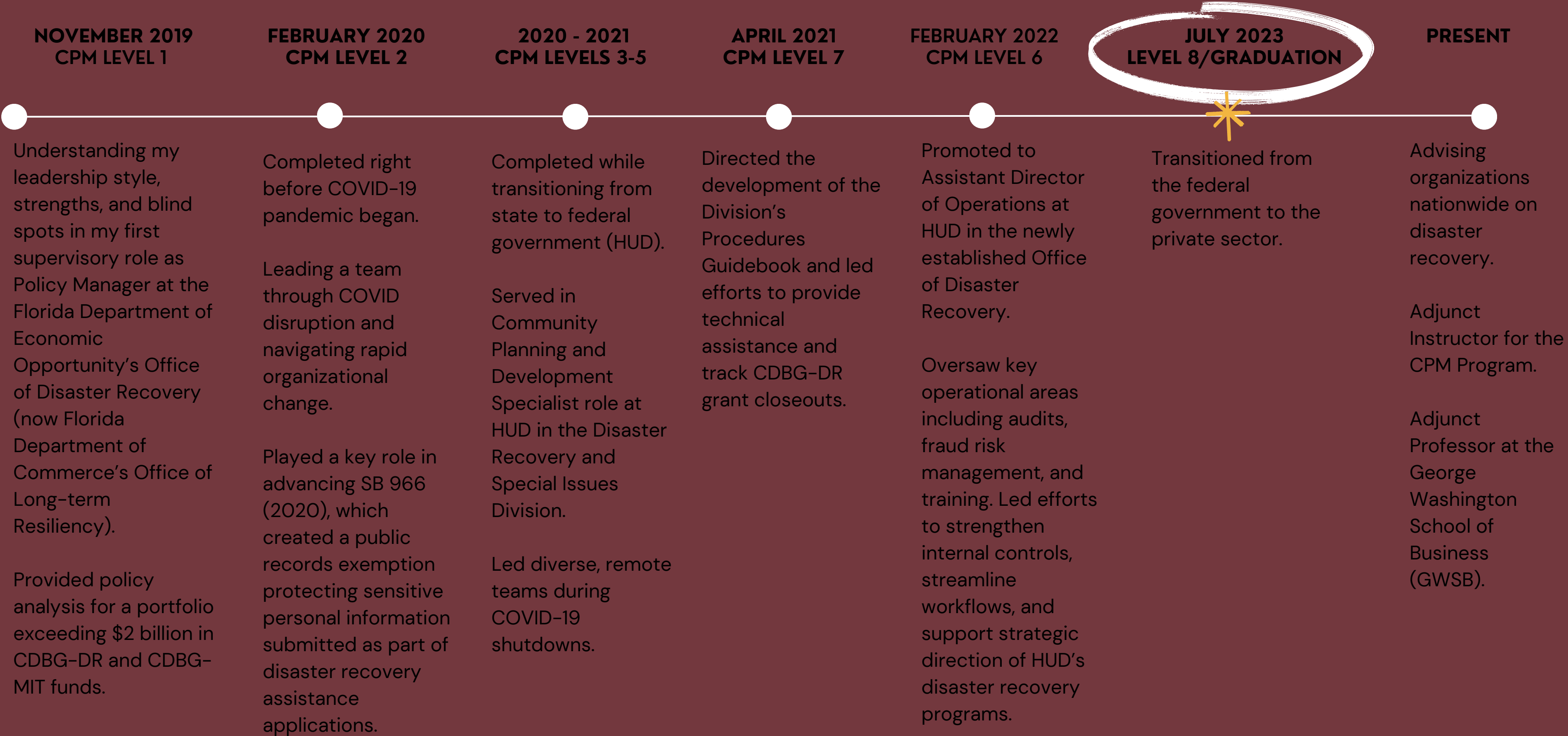


### LOCAL GOVERNMENT



# My Leadership Journey Through CPM

Each CPM level arrived exactly when it was needed most.





# How CPM Shaped My Leadership

| LEVEL 1:<br>SELF-AWARENESS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | LEVEL 2:<br>GROUP<br>DYNAMICS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | LEVEL 3:<br>PRODUCTIVITY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | LEVEL 4:<br>POWER &<br>INFLUENCE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | LEVEL 5:<br>CHANGE<br>LEADERSHIP                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | LEVEL 6:<br>SYSTEMS<br>THINKING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | LEVEL 7:<br>PUBLIC<br>POLICY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Competency:</b><br/>Enhancing collaboration, communication, and team effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Application:</b><br/>Improved cross-team communication within HUD. Learned to manage differing work styles and foster cohesion across functional teams supporting disaster recovery.</p> | <p><b>Competency:</b><br/>Understanding personal leadership style, values, and behavioral impact.</p> <p><b>Application:</b><br/>Reflected on how my strengths and communication style influence team dynamics. Used insights to better navigate challenges in my role at HUD and align my actions with agency values.</p> | <p><b>Competency:</b><br/>Setting goals, managing time, and optimizing efficiency.</p> <p><b>Application:</b><br/>Applied project management tools to streamline disaster recovery workflows and track critical deadlines, improving follow-up and responsiveness.</p> | <p><b>Competency:</b><br/>Using influence ethically to motivate, persuade, and lead change.</p> <p><b>Application:</b><br/>Positioned myself as a trusted resource in policy discussions. Championed improvements to grants management practices by leveraging subject-matter expertise and relationship-building.</p> | <p><b>Competency:</b><br/>Leading through transition, uncertainty, and resistance.</p> <p><b>Application:</b><br/>Played a key role in the transformation of HUD's Disaster Recovery and Special Issues Division into the Office of Disaster Recovery. Supported staff through structural changes while implementing operational reforms.</p> | <p><b>Competency:</b><br/>Understanding interdependencies across systems, policies, and stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Application:</b><br/>Identified disconnects between grant oversight processes and policy outcomes. Streamlined workflows to better align federal guidelines with grantee performance and internal operations.</p> | <p><b>Competency:</b><br/>Applying policy analysis to improve programs and decision-making.</p> <p><b>Application:</b><br/>As Team Lead, developed HUD's Procedures Guidebook and led technical assistance and closeout tracking efforts to align CDBG-DR operations with federal policy.</p> |



# From Crisis Response to Strategic Rebuilding

## Disaster Recovery Continuum

### Short-Term

Immediate response  
Safety & stabilization  
Emergency operations



### Intermediate

Restoring services  
Temporary solutions  
Community assessment



### Long-Term

Permanent rebuilding  
Policy reform  
Resilience planning

### Action Plan for Disaster Recovery

**Focus:** Operational response & restoration

#### Priority Actions:

- Assess damage and immediate needs
- Deploy resources to affected areas
- Coordinate with federal/state agencies
- Establish temporary housing & services
- Communicate with impacted communities

#### Success Measures:

- Speed of service restoration
- Coverage of affected populations
- Compliance with recovery timelines
- Stakeholder satisfaction

### Leadership Action Plan

**Focus:** People, decisions & organizational capacity

#### Priority Actions:

- Identify core leadership challenges
- Apply CPM competencies to decisions
- Align team around shared priorities
- Balance transparency with stability
- Build trust through ethical reasoning

#### Success Measures:

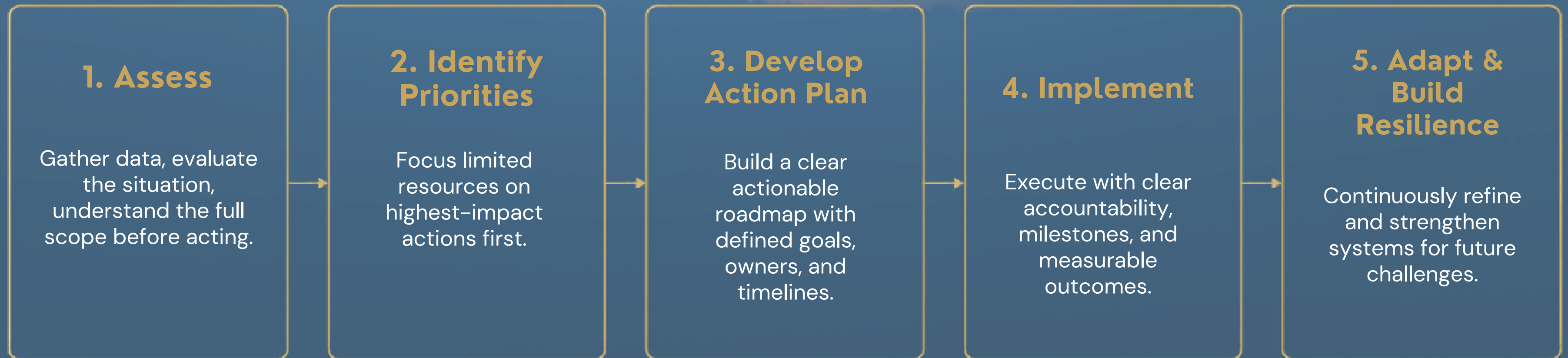
- Team cohesion and morale
- Clarity of communication
- Ethical defensibility of decisions
- Long-term organizational resilience

Both plans work together — one addresses the crisis directly, the other addresses how you lead through it.



# Leadership Action Plan

A structured process transforms uncertainty into action — in disaster recovery and in leadership.



# Your Mission

Three objectives to guide your leadership simulation today



## Analyze

Review your scenario and identify the core leadership challenges at play



## Develop

Build a Leadership Action Plan with priorities, strategy, and measures of success



## Present

Share your team plan and the leadership principles that guided your decisions



# Activity Instructions

## The Challenge

**Task:** Draft a Leadership Action Plan in response to your assigned crisis.

**Role:** You are the leadership team responsible for navigating the crisis.

**Goal:** Apply at least two distinct CPM competencies to address the leadership challenges in your scenario.

## Time Allocation - 30 Minutes

### 1. Planning & Strategy

**25 minutes** to develop your Leadership Action Plan.

Use the provided **Leadership Action Plan** worksheet to guide your discussion.

### 2. Prepare Presentation

**5 minutes** to transfer key points of your plan to a flip chart.



### LEADERSHIP ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET

Scenario Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. Immediate Needs Assessment

*What are the top 1–2 urgent issues you must address first? What must be stabilized?*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Short-Term Strategy

*What actions will help maintain team functionality or program continuity in the next 30–90 days?*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. Long-Term Strategy

*What's your leadership vision to build resilience, improve systems, or prevent future issues?*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. CPM Concepts Applied

*List at least 2 CPM takeaways your group used:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 5. Group Presentation Notes

*(Use this space to sketch out key points for your 5 minute presentation)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# BUDGET HURRICANE

## *Fiscal Shock and Mission Protection*

### **SITUATION:**

Your agency is facing a sudden 30% budget cut in the middle of the fiscal year. The reduction places key programs, staffing plans, vendor commitments, and service delivery expectations at risk. Staff morale is declining as employees worry about workload, job security, and the future of the agency's work. At the same time, elected officials, community partners, program participants, and other stakeholders are demanding answers about what will be protected, what may change, and how decisions will be made.

### **MISSION:**

Stabilize operations, protect critical services, and lead your team through fiscal uncertainty with transparency, purpose, and accountability.

### **KEY LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS:**

- Which programs, services, or functions are mission-critical and must be protected?
- How do you communicate difficult decisions to staff, stakeholders, and the public with honesty and care?
- What short-term sacrifices may be necessary to support long-term organizational resilience?
- How do you maintain team trust, morale, and focus when resources are scarce?





# SYSTEMS FLOOD

## *Technology Failure and Service Disruption*

### **SITUATION:**

Your agency's core data systems have been overwhelmed by a surge of incoming requests following a policy change. Critical databases are lagging, staff cannot access case files, and public-facing portals are down. Constituents are unable to receive services.

### **MISSION:**

Restore operational continuity, maintain public trust, and lead your team through a technology-driven service disruption.

### **KEY LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS:**

- How do you prioritize which systems, services, and constituent needs should be restored first?
- How do you communicate transparently with staff, leadership, stakeholders, and the public while information is still evolving?
- Which CPM competencies should guide your decision-making under pressure?
- How do you address the immediate disruption while preventing the issue from becoming a long-term operational crisis?





# LEADERSHIP DROUGHT

## *Turnover, Trust, and Organizational Stability*

**SITUATION:** Your agency has experienced 18 months of leadership turnover. Three directors have departed, institutional knowledge is eroding, staff morale is critically low, and public trust is declining.

No formal succession plan exists, and the organization is overly dependent on a small number of long-tenured staff who carry critical knowledge. You are responsible for stabilizing the agency, restoring confidence, and creating the foundation for a more sustainable leadership structure.

**MISSION:** Stabilize the organization, restore internal and external confidence, preserve institutional knowledge, and build a sustainable leadership pipeline.

### **KEY LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS:**

- How do you lead effectively when the team has lost faith in leadership?
- What immediate actions rebuild trust and morale?
- How do you preserve institutional knowledge and develop future leaders?
- What does your 30-day stabilization plan look like?





# COMMUNITY WILDFIRE

## *Public Backlash and Staff Safety*

### **SITUATION:**

A controversial policy change has triggered intense public backlash across the community. Public meetings have become emotionally charged, social media criticism is spreading quickly, and misinformation is making it harder for residents to understand the purpose and impact of the policy. Some staff members are now receiving personal threats and are beginning to feel unsafe, unsupported, and hesitant to engage with the public.

### **MISSION:**

Restore community confidence, reduce conflict, and support staff while moving forward with responsible policy implementation.

### **KEY LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS:**

- How do you balance policy implementation with meaningful community engagement?
- What communication strategies can help deescalate conflict, address misinformation, and rebuild trust?
- How do you support staff who are under pressure, facing public criticism, or receiving threats?





# INNOVATION STORM

## *Modernization Under Pressure*

### **SITUATION:**

Your agency has fallen behind technologically, and the consequences are becoming visible. Outdated systems are slowing service delivery, staff are frustrated by inefficient processes, and the public is beginning to lose confidence in the agency's ability to meet community needs. At the same time, many employees are resistant to adopting new tools, leadership lacks consistent digital fluency, and a new administration is demanding rapid modernization.

### **MISSION:**

Lead a technology transformation initiative while maintaining service continuity and bringing your team along through the change.

### **KEY LEADERSHIP QUESTIONS:**

- How do you build a coalition for change among staff who are skeptical or resistant?
- How do you prioritize and sequence innovation without disrupting essential operations?
- How do you develop digital capacity across the team, including among leaders who may lack digital fluency?





## LEADERSHIP ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET

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Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

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*What are the top 1–2 urgent issues you must address first? What must be stabilized?*

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*What actions will help maintain team functionality or program continuity in the next 30–90 days?*

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### 4. CPM Concepts Applied

*List at least 2 CPM takeaways your group used:*

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### 5. Group Presentation Notes

*(Use this space to sketch out key points for your 5 minute presentation)*

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## PRESENTATION GUIDANCE

- ✓ Focus on how you applied CPM competencies.
- ✓ Highlight your strategic thinking.
- ✓ Explain your rationale for chosen actions
- ✓ Discuss potential challenges and adaptations







# LET'S DEBRIEF!

1 Which CPM competencies showed up across the scenarios?

2 What leadership approaches were transferable across different situations?

3 What strategy or mindset from another group could you apply in your own work?

4 What will you carry forward in your leadership practice?



# Lessons from the Disaster Recovery Playbook

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- Assess before acting
- Engage stakeholders



- Prioritize what matters
- Develop an Action Plan



- Adapt continuously
- Build resilience

*"Leadership is not about having all the answers. It's about having a process for leading through complexity."*



# ASSESS. PLAN. ADAPT. LEAD.

Every disaster is different. Every leadership challenge is different.  
But the process for leading through complexity remains remarkably  
consistent.



# Commitment Wall

Write one specific  
leadership commitment  
you'll make in the next  
30 days!

I will practice systems  
thinking when  
coordinating between  
departments.

Will implement weekly  
team check-ins.

I will ask for feedback  
from my team before  
making major decisions.

- Post your commitment on the wall
- Find an accountability partner
- Check in after 30 days





# Let's Stay Connected!

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