

# **NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS AND THE FIVE DIMENSIONS OF META-LEADERSHIP**

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## **NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE**

A Joint Program of the Harvard School of Public Health  
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Achievement of national preparedness - given current natural and man-made threats - requires a heightened capacity for effective cross-government coordination of effort. This objective is hindered by the tendency of leaders to advocate the specific interests and purposes of their narrow SILO of activity.

META-LEADERS think and perform differently. They recognize that achieving genuine national preparedness demands a spirit of cooperation combined with tangible inter-agency mechanisms that activate JOINTNESS.

By intentionally linking and leveraging the efforts of many agencies – along with corporate, non-profit, and community sectors – meta-leaders galvanize a valuable CONNECTIVITY of effort.

META-LEADERSHIP reframes the process and practice of leaders. It has three functions: 1) A comprehensive organizing REFERENCE to understand and integrate the many facets of leadership; 2) A STRATEGY to engage collaborative activity; 3) A cause and PURPOSE to improve government functioning and performance. There are five dimensions to the learning and practice of meta-leadership:

1. **THE PERSON OF THE META-LEADER:** Emotional intelligence: self awareness and self-regulation. The capacity to confront fear, which takes you to your emotional “basement.” Meta-leaders lead themselves and others out of the “basement” to higher levels of thinking and functioning.
2. **SITUATIONAL AWARENESS:** With often incomplete information, the meta-leader creates a broad “frame of reference,” used to determine what is happening, the presenting choice points, and then to chart and meta-lead a course of action, effectively recruiting wide engagement and support.
3. **LEADING YOUR SILO:** The meta-leader triggers and models confidence, inspiring others to excellence. The meta-leader drives the learning curve to elevate quality and performance, encouraging strong, effective subordinates who themselves further galvanize cross-silo connectivity.
4. **LEADING UP:** Validating the power-command equation, the meta-leader effectively “manages the boss.” Truth to power, effective communication, and being a great subordinate are critical, especially when subject matter experts report to and guide political leaders.
5. **LEADING CROSS-AGENCY CONNECTIVITY:** Meta-leaders strategically and intentionally devise cross-silo linkages that leverage expertise, resources, and information across the spectrum of public agencies and private constituencies, integrating and thereby optimizing capacity and response.

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Leading Up & Leading Down together are *Vertical Connectivity*. Leading Across Silos is *Horizontal Connectivity*.

