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## **Four Key Questions**

- What approach to leadership makes sense in the current crisis ?
- What do past efforts at reform, and the current crisis, tell us about leadership capacity in the public service
- What do we know about the habitual or 'default' modes of thinking and behaviour in the public service and how they may facilitate or inhibit leadership?
- In leadership development, what capacities do we need to develop, and how?

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- Leadership is fundamentally about helping systems to learn and adapt to meet new circumstances
- This means mobilising people to address difficult challenges they might rather avoid

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- Crises reflect a failure to successfully adapt
- Past efforts at public sector reform has demonstrated that we have been good at addressing important technical challenges related to structure, technology and process but not good at addressing adaptive challenges that require changes to culture, mindsets and behaviour.

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- Not surprisingly skills and capacities reflect what is already embedded and valued in the system- 'hard' skills, structure, control, technical understanding of the system, intellectual and conceptual skills
- Much less developed are the capacities required for successful adaptation – a tolerance for risk and conflict, innovation, people management skills, and interpreting environment

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- Challenging defaults, assumptions and settled positions; 'reading' the environment; developing tolerance for risk and conflict and a capacity for innovation; developing more collective leadership; staying connected to purpose; developing a learning system
- The learning environment must facilitate behavioural and emotional, as well as intellectual, learning.