Ron Heifetz, with his colleagues Alexander Grashow and Marty Linsky, promote the practice of adaptive leadership as the most effective approach to managing and leading in the current economic situation. In their article, *Managing in a (Permanent) Crisis,* *(Harvard Business Review,* July-August 2009, pp. 62-69) they suggest that crisis leadership has two phases:

The first phase is the emergency phase “when your task is to stabilize the situation and buy time.”

The second phase is the adaptive phase “when you tackle the underlying causes of the crisis and build the capacity to thrive in the new reality.”

*Adaptive leadership* is “the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive.” It is “a daily opportunity to mobilize the resources of people to thrive in a changing and challenging world.”

They suggest the following strategies:

1. Foster adaptation by:
   - confronting loyalty to legacy practices
   - distinguishing the “essential from the expendable”
   - running numerous experiments

2. Embrace disequilibrium by:
   - monitoring the “thermostat”
   - depersonalizing conflict
   - creating a “culture of courageous conversations”
3. Generate leadership by:
   - empowering staff to engage in adaptive work by distributing leadership responsibility across the organization
   - mobilizing everyone to generate solutions
   - leveraging diversity

4. Take care of yourself by:
   - being both optimistic and realistic
   - “finding sanctuaries” – places where you can be reflective and regain perspective
   - reach out to confidants to debrief and review your actions and decisions
   - bring more of your emotional self to the workplace
   - don’t lose yourself in your role

Maureen Sullivan