**Title:** The Leadership of Emergence – A Complex Systems Leadership Theory of Emergence

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**Description:** Benyamin B. Lichtenstein from University of Massachusetts, Boston and Donde Ashmos Plowman from University of Nebraska-Lincoln, explore how complexity science reframes leadership.

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Abstract: Complexity science reframes leadership by focusing on the dynamic interactions between all individuals, explaining how those interactions can, under certain conditions, produce emergent outcomes. We develop a Leadership of Emergence using this approach, through an analysis of three empirical studies which document emergence in distinct contexts. Each of these studies identifies the same four “conditions” for emergence: the presence of a Dis-equilibrium state, Amplifying actions, Recombination/“Self-organization”, and Stabilizing feedback. From these studies we also show how these conditions can be generated through nine specific behaviors which leaders can enact, including: Disrupt existing patterns through embracing uncertainty and creating controversy, Encourage novelty by allowing experiments and supporting collective action, Provide sense-making and sense-giving through the artful use of language and symbols, and Stabilize the system by Integrating local constraints. Finally, we suggest ways for advancing a meso-model of leadership, and show how our findings can improve complexity science applications in management.



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