

Leadership skills in EIA project management

Ross Marshall, PhD, FIEMA

ross@leading-green.com



Leading Green
SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP

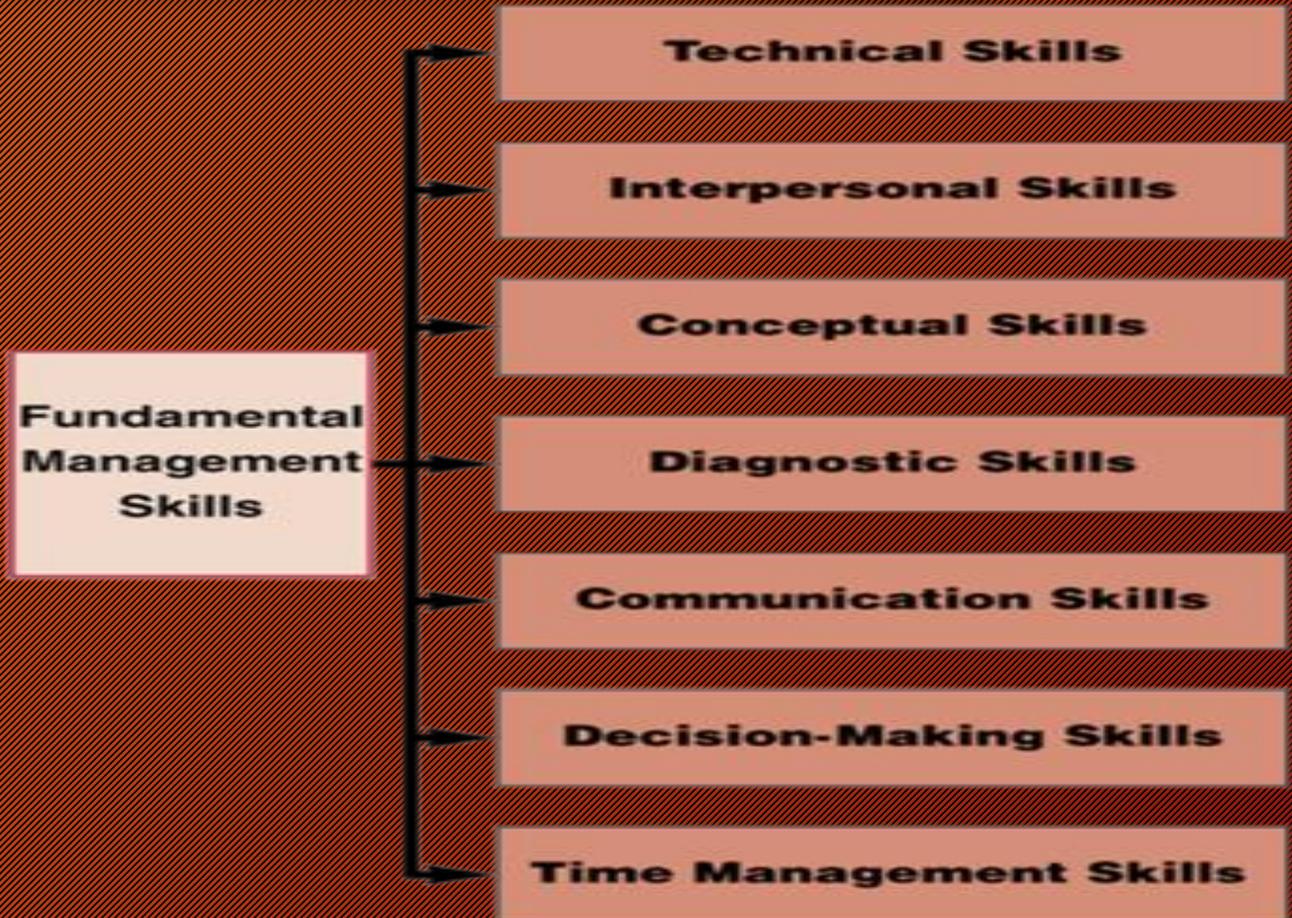
The impact of ESIA is plateauing off,
it has become stuck as a junior or
middle management grade activity

If we don't step up in leadership we
are doomed as a profession



Project EIA Management skills

- A set of explicit tools and techniques
- Administrative aspects
- Functional planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of agreed actions
- Communication & Report



Leaders lead, Followers follow

EIA Project Managers focus on project targets and processes



EIA Leaders focus on project outcomes

How is Leadership in EIA demonstrated

At its core, by our ability to influence:

- The sustainability of the final design's outcomes
- The residual cumulative impacts; and
- The project's positive contribution to people and their environment



The need for Leadership in ESIA

- We live in a world with real limits for sustainable growth
- We possess no 'Plan A' for a sustainable industrial society
- Our resource demands & infrastructure needs continue to rise
- Too many ecosystems (& their ESS), are threatened by further development,
- We still utilise short-term finance models in infrastructure investment planning
- We need to raise the bar for Public Funded project performance outcomes where public goods or ecosystem services are at risk

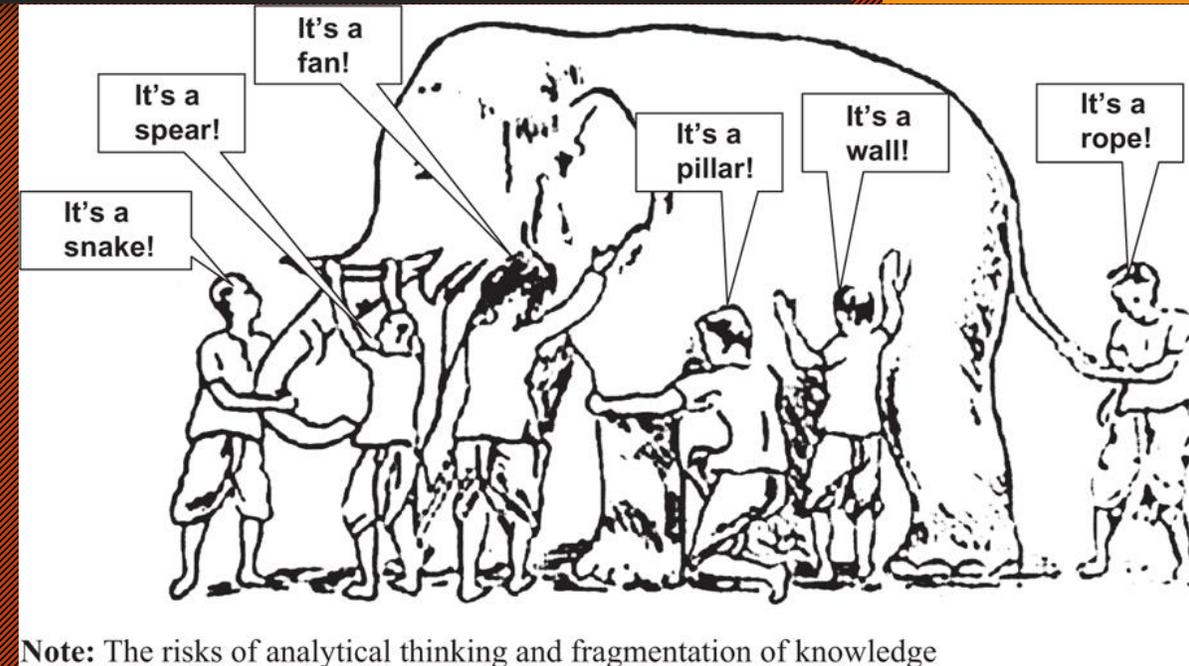
Professionally we need to define:

- Who we are?
- The value and benefits from IA management & practice
- How we as a professional discipline communicate with other project team managers, members, the client and society



Leadership: A Matter of Viewpoint

- Many theories of Leadership
- Majority revolve around traits & behaviours such as
 - Personal skills
 - Communication skills
 - Thinking skills
 - Delegation
 - Decision Making
 - Organisational dynamics
- Little research or application to:
 - Team or Project Leadership in EIA
 - Leading for Environmental & Social Outcomes



A Story



I know what you are thinking



- Scope creep
- Over-design
- Quality, cost, schedule, & liability exposure.
- Deprived others of work
- Need to re do Gantt charts
- Timeline
- New HSE risks
- Intervention between the Project Manager & Client's original agreed & and costed brief

What I look for leadership in Leadership skills in EIA project management



Impact Assessment



ESIA



ESIA & CSR



Public Sector ESIA Management



Leadership skills: ESIA Team management

- **Team Calibre** - Creates leadership within the ESIA.
- **Room to Practice:** Individuals given the confidence to maximise their professional skills
- **Connects:** The team has the opportunity to engage across the ESIA disciplines (internal) and ensures it is integrated within the wider project team (external)
- **Actively leads the team through adaptive change**
- **Goal-orientated:** The confidence to seek and propose wider ESIA & sustainability outcomes

EIA Leadership skills: Project Management Group

- Outcomes Focused (versus Deliverables Focused)
- Diplomacy
- Adds Value (versus Counts Value)
- Vision
- Focuses on Effectiveness (rather than Efficiency)
- Lets people know what the ESIA lead is thinking

EIA Leadership skills: The Client

80% of project managers don't know how their projects align with the company's business strategy!

Have you consulted with the Sustainability Manager, CSR or Environmental Director of the client organisation?

Have you sought out their input & influence into projects, sought to understand the dynamics within the client organisation's CSR goals or SDG objectives?



The keys to Leadership in EIA

- General Attributes of ESIA professionals
- 'Freedom to Operate'



Characteristics often observed often in ESIA professional examinations

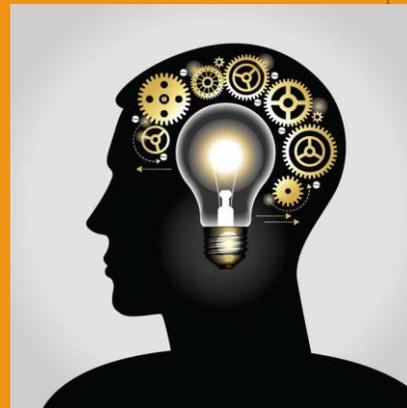
- Vocational elements
- Altruism
- Situational Awareness:
- An expanded worldview of ourselves and others
- Post conventual worldview (capacity for change and innovation)
- Integrity
- Independence
- Curiosity
- Enhanced systems thinking

Characteristics often observed in Project Managers when dealing with ESIA professionals



EIA Leadership - The 'Power to Operate'

Freedom to Operate
Independently



Professional Knowledge

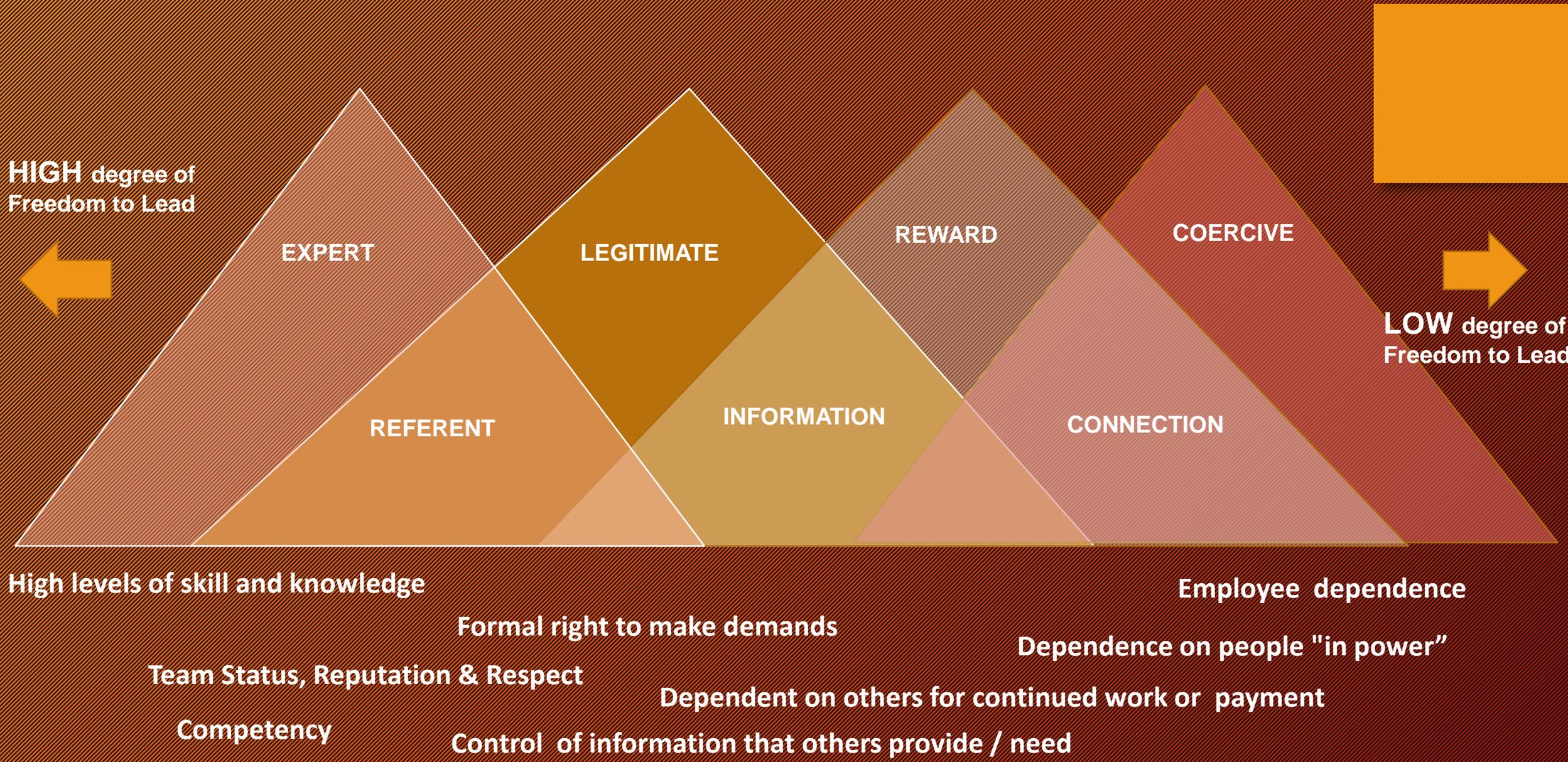
Reputation & Status



Access to Information

Possessing the power to change minds, to go beyond IA & Compliance

Leadership in EIA & the ability to exert influence over outcomes



Final Thoughts

- Leadership is not about learnt skills, systems or processes, it is about the attributes we bring to project outcomes.
- Leadership in ESIA project management is about being adaptable and making a difference by thinking differently.
- To assert what must remain open and transparent , even when the project team doesn't want to hear or address it or give “bad news,@ to the client
- One of the key leadership challenges we face in our profession is the ability to be able to deal with the short-term pressures of today and to part of and create the vision of tomorrow.
- Be honest and independently minded about the gap between the risks inherent in short-term project management culture and the its long-term impact on society.
- Start considering what steps do you want to make in your own leadership journey and how you can influence the next generation of EIA professionals,

Conclusions

We have a positive future but we need to step upwards

We possess valuable skills & attributes that will become increasingly necessary for leadership in the future .

We need to start harnessing them into our profession to help project teams consider, discuss and deliver a clearer understanding of the project's contribution to society.

We need to start linking EISA to the client's objectives in CSR, sustainability & SDG.

Our leadership capability to influence the sustainability of the Project's final design's outcomes, its residual cumulative impacts; and its positive contribution to people and their environments is our key leadership role.

Thank You

In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other. That time is now.

Wangari Maathai

