Adaptive Action

In 1976, Karl Weick provided an alternative to planning paralysis when he wrote The Social Psychology of Organizing. He explained that you cannot wait to know before you act, because you cannot know until you act.

The concept and practice of adaptive action:

- **“What?”**
- **“So what?”**
- **“Now what?”**

**What –**

- What is going on?
- What patterns do we observe?
- What seems to be constant?
- What is changing?

**So what?**

- So what does it mean?
- What implications can we see?
- What conditions are shaping the current pattern, and What do they mean for the patterns we intend?
- What are the diverse interpretations of observations?
- So what are options for meaningful action?

**Now what**

- Now what will we do to shift the pattern?
- What are pros and cons of possible options?
- What is within our ability, scope of influence, time and resource constraints?
- How will we know whether the action was successful?
- When will we begin our next cycle of adaptive action?