



# Technology Policies: Before You Start Cooking, Have a Recipe

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(Stephen)

Note: an outline of what we plan to speak about is in the notes section for each slide.

- Feel free to put questions in the chat throughout.
- There will be spots for everyone to ask questions and give input.
- During those times feel free to unmute and chime in, or just send your thoughts via chat and we'll read them out.



## About Us



(Both)



## What We Are Covering Today

- Why tech policies are so important (especially now).
- Getting started: first steps in policy adoption.
- Creating a culture that is friendly to tech policies.
- The nuts and bolts of building policy buy-in among staff.
- Communicating and enforcing new policies.



(Stephen)



## What We Are *Not* Covering Today

- Which specific policies to adopt.
- Best practices for the policies themselves.
- The substance of any policies.



(Mary)



# Why Tech Policies are So Important (Especially Now)

(Stephen)



## Why *Always*?

- Predictability for new staff.
- Structure for all staff.
- Funder and regulator compliance.
- A way of embedding care for your clients and the people you serve into your organization.



(Stephen)



## Why Now?

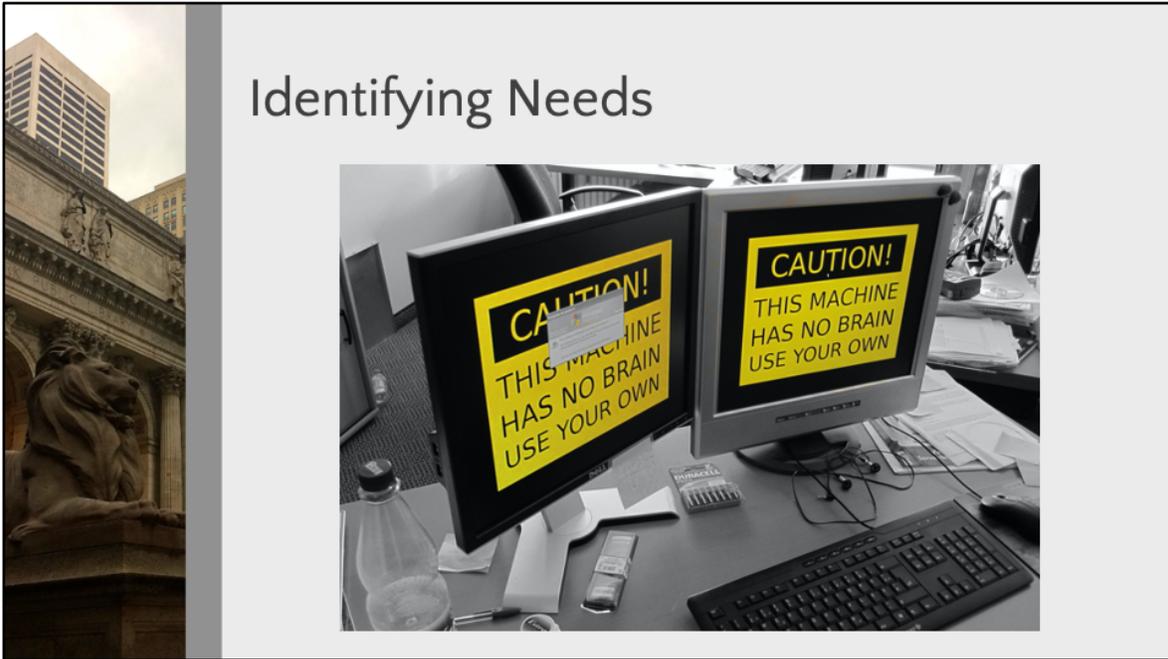
- Lots of new systems, new norms.
- Elevated security and privacy risk.
- Creation of stability in an unstable-feeling situation.



(Mary)

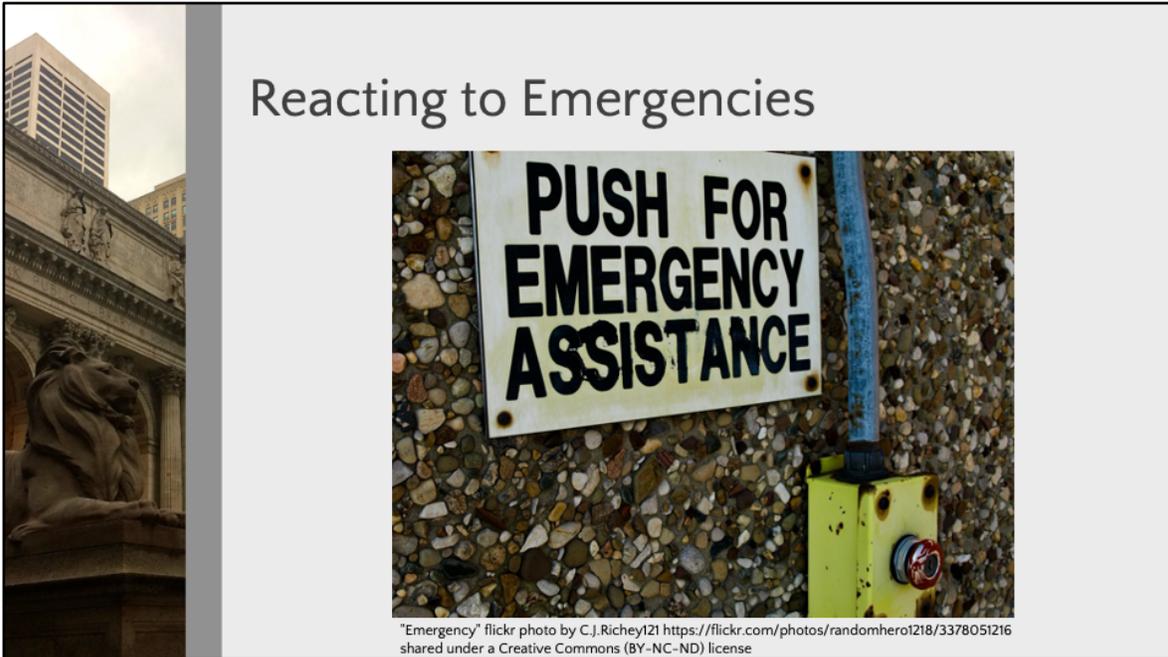


(Stephen)



(Stephen)

- Some ideas on how to think through which policies to hit first.
- We're looking at parts of technology usage that rely on user's discretion. How to be smart about directing that discretion.



(Stephen)

- Emergencies are the most common trigger for policy development, but don't wait for them.
- If you do have an emergency, don't over-react, and don't tailor your policies to just that emergency.
- Example: if someone picks up a virus from a website, don't just block that website, consider a more fully-featured content policy.

## Using Existing Tools to Spot Trouble



(Stephen)

- Ask managers and workers what they're confused about, where they and their folks hit snags, where managers have to intervene a lot, etc.
- Look at data sources to see where problems arise
- Example: missing data around certain fields in CMS might reflect people not following intake policies.

(Mary)

- Example: your IT management software--review monthly ticket reports; your own email

## Policies Do a Wide Variety of Work



(Mary)

- Social media use (don't talk about clients on your personal page, etc.).
- Personal device use (no public wifi, etc.).
- Non-technical behavior in technical systems: e.g. document storage / naming conventions.
- Meta-policies (which tech do we adopt? What do we consider in adoption? How do we implement policies? How do we forecast change? No now is better than yes now and no later)

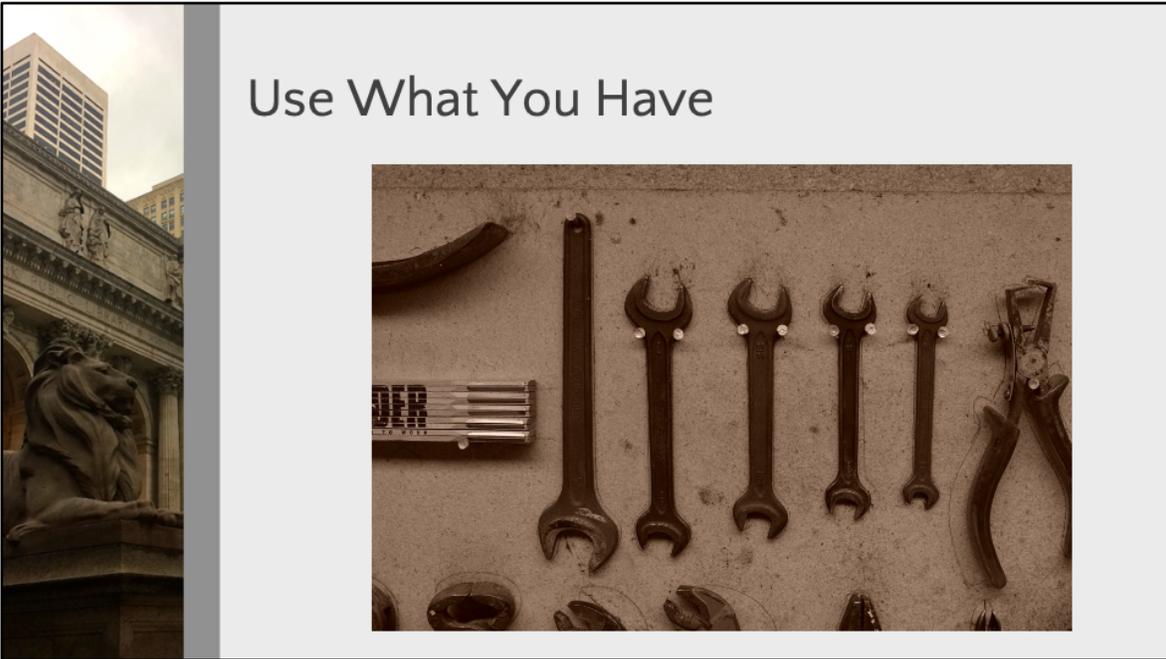
## Start Early!



"In praise of 'colorful' libraries" flickr photo by sniggle <https://flickr.com/photos/sniegowski/49042121192> shared under a Creative Commons (BY-NC-SA) license

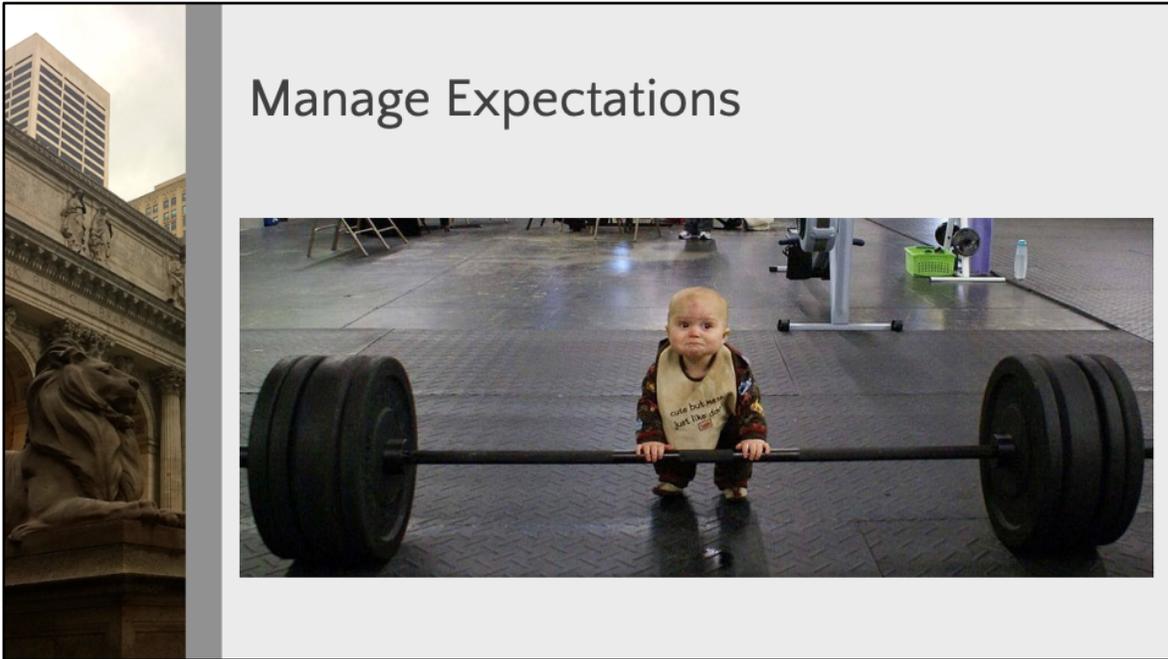
(Mary)

- Consider policy when you consider new technology.
- It'll be easier to adopt them if they're in everyone's mind already.
- Every problem you solve relies on people using the solution properly. Document this along with all other aspects of tech adoption. Don't make policies people-specific, but role-specific. If your policies have a person's name or email in them, they are too narrow. Imagine that person hitting the lottery and disappearing.
- Consider policy writing a core aspect of rollouts.



(Stephen)

- Don't adopt entirely new processes where you don't have to.
- Instead, think about what you can do to guide existing processes.
- Consider if a policy fix will address a problem before a purchased solution will.
- Example: documents all over the place isn't a doc management system problem, it's a policy problem.



(Mary)

- Policies are not magic.
- People have to buy in early and commit early to make them work.
- Policies are not one-size-fits-all (i.e. don't copy some other organization's wholesale).
- Meet people where they are. Don't try to push into your ideal world fast.
- One step at a time, one policy at a time.
- Applaud compliance.



(Stephen)



(Mary)

- Focus on service. (walking in those sneakers that we hope have been washed)
- How would you feel if someone mishandled your private info?
- You are being entrusted with people's' lives; you owe them care.
- Hippocratic--first, do no harm

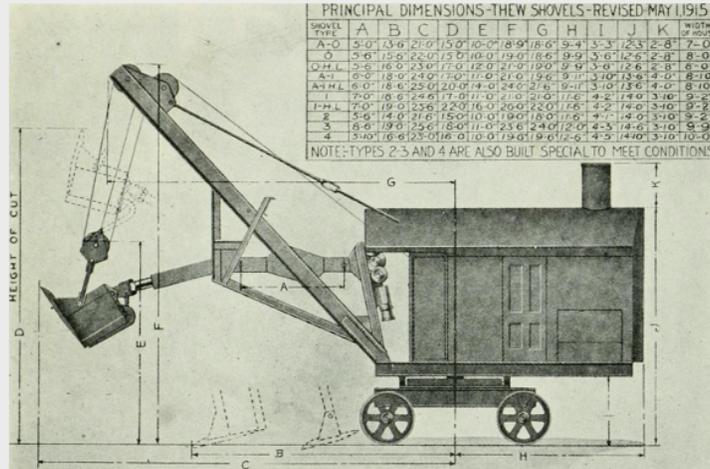


(Stephen)

- For attorneys especially!
- It's an ethical violation to leave private correspondence on a park bench; it's the same violation to use the park's unsecured wifi.
- Care for clients' privacy is a duty that extends to every action we take.



## The Industry Standards Approach



(Mary)

- Documented best practices in the industry.
- There are policies from non-legal IT control organizations: ISACA.
- News stories and scare tactics: ransomware, phishing stories a great source for motivation.
- Also look at what your regulatory bodies and funders require.



(Mary)

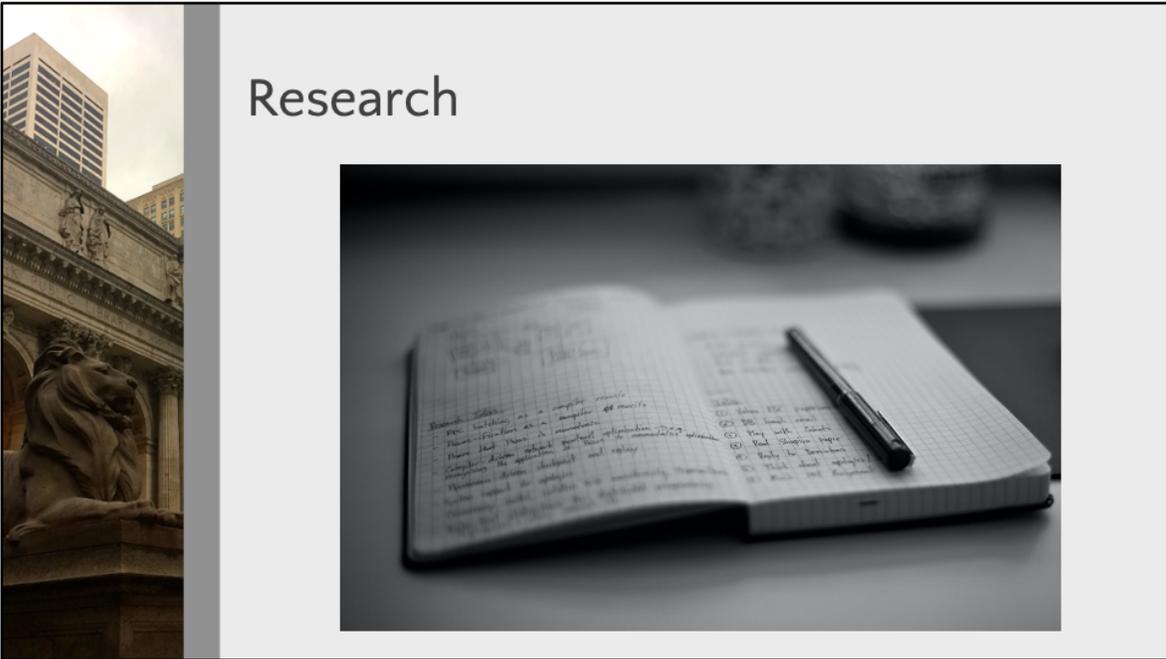
- Policies are not a “no”!
- Cite your sources, show your work / research.

(Stephen)

- Target your strategies to groups, specific meeting spaces.
- Consider buck-passing when you just can't get someone into it (“sorry, but our funders require you to put a password on your iphone”).
- People who supervise your line staff are the most important group



(Stephen)



(Mary)

- Be clear about who's doing your pre-research before writing anything. Have accountability for making statements.
- Include people other than IT; include those who actually do the work. They will tell you if something won't work, but you can't wilt under that.



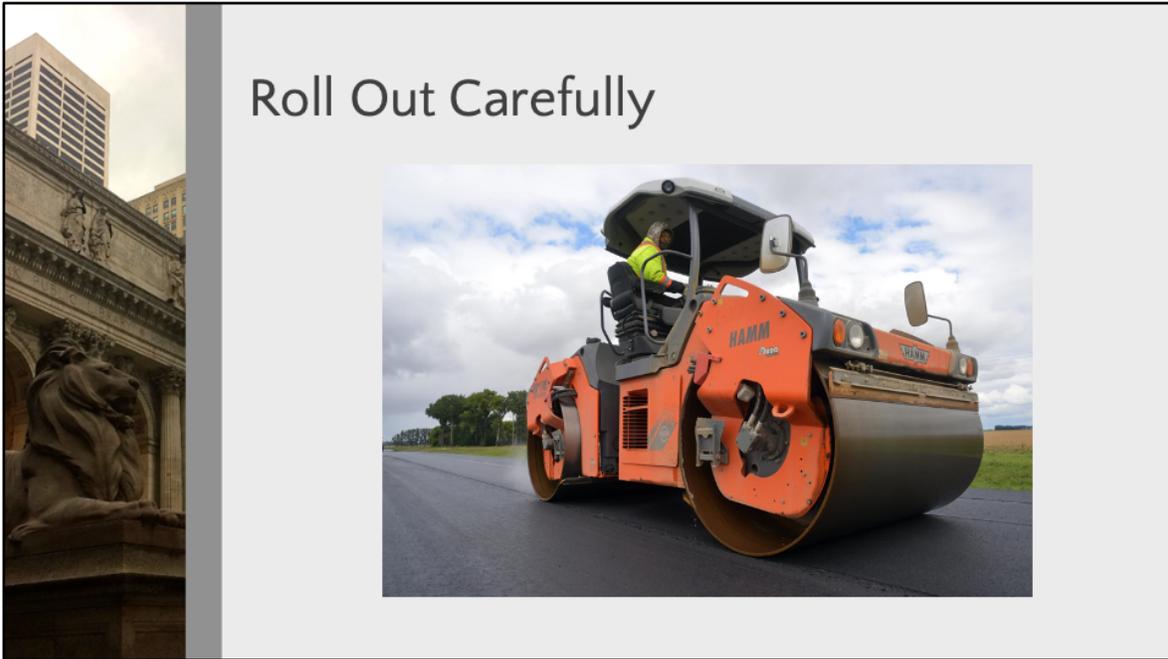
(Stephen)

- Create structure for input and feedback on policy. Bootstrap: make sure you can say later “we were so excited to get your feedback, and we announced it five times, but we never heard from you”
- Document feedback to make sure you address it all. Include list of attendees on meeting minutes.
- Accountability of those speaking on behalf of others.
- No one should be surprised.



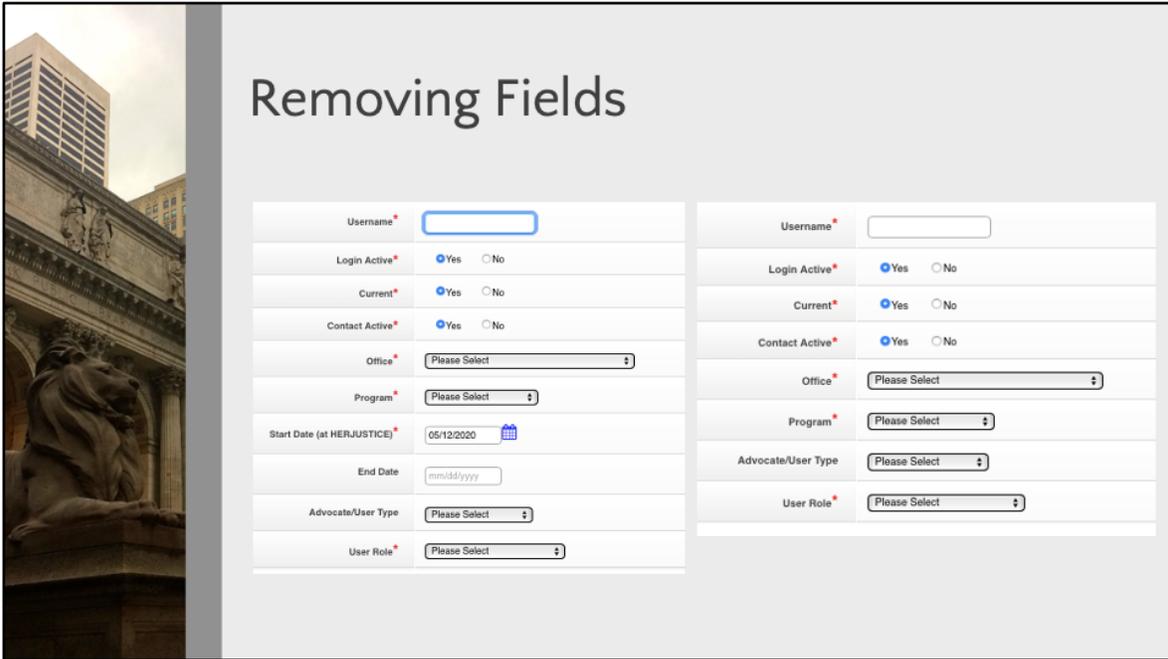
(Mary)

- Consider the cost of implementing a policy (e.g. a “no public wifi” rule might mean mifis and hotspots)
- Work extra hard (extra sales pitches) on folks who might have to do extra work because of it (e.g. a policy against bringing files home possibly puts burden on scanning staff)



(Stephen)

- Communicate expectations clearly and widely.
- Create a cushion of time before things really kick off.
- Consider rolling out in phases across areas of the office, BUT consider the cost of people using different approaches in different areas (e.g. people doing reimbursement requests in multiple different ways)



(Mary)

- If a policy says “don’t use this old system” or “don’t use this old field,” lock those out a few weeks after the deadline, after multiple warnings



(Stephen)



(Stephen)

- Don't forget normal best-practices for effective communication.

(Mary)

- Emails, signs, videos, chats



## Training



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(Mary)

- People learn in different ways, so have materials in different forms (e.g. video, screenshots, checklists) (Stephen and Joanne did a presentation on this)
- If there's a new process or new tech associated with a new policy, obviously you need to train on those.
- Also consider if examples of your policy are necessary (this kind of social media post is fine, this one isn't, etc.), or training on how to comply.



(Stephen)

- The front lines of policy communication and enforcement.
- This might be the biggest culture lift! Has a lot to do with how managers currently consider their roles.
- Use existing manager training structure, but maybe consider new if you're going to ask managers to do more work.



## Conclusions and Important Takeaways



## Key Takeaways

- Policy communication and implementation are not one-time, one-size-fits-all events. They are processes and culture shifts.
- Culture shift is a large job, and policies are both one tool **and** one positive outcome of such shifts.
- Start small, be honest with yourself, meet staff where they are.
- Don't choose this stressful time to try to overhaul everything. Instead, choose one thing, do it well, learn from it, and try again with another thing.

(Both)



# Questions/Discussion

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