

# How to transfer / accept leadership

## Tips for stepping away from / into visible leadership

### Yielding Power

- ☐ Actively make way for a local colleague to lead processes with stakeholders, **even if there is an expectation on the part of the stakeholder that the white staff member will lead.**
- ☐ Model local leadership in meetings and events, even if it is not the norm and might make some people uncomfortable. For example, a government official may feel insulted if the perceived senior (that is, the white staff member) is not leading. You may need to explicitly hand over leadership of the meeting to your local colleague and validate their skills to lead the discussion.
- ☐ **The leadership of your local colleague must be genuine.** The local staff member needs to be in real control of the meeting or event, not looking to white staff on issues that come up or deferring or referring discussions to white staff.
- ☐ Even if the meeting is not going the way you would have run it, or if you think there are emerging issues, don't intervene. Rather, debrief with your colleague later.
- ☐ Be comfortable with being a participant at meetings and events, rather than being the expert.

### Wielding Power

- ☐ Reflect on your preparedness and willingness to lead when a white colleague is present. Have you sometimes found that you are comfortable with avoiding the responsibility of leading challenging meetings or processes, and being able to fault the white colleague's lack of cultural skill if it doesn't go well?
- ☐ Prepare with your white colleague for how you will take leadership of meetings and events.
- ☐ Discuss with your white colleague an agreed process for a constructive debriefing after meetings or processes.

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## Tips for local leadership planning

### Yielding Power

- ☐ Develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for white team leaders and senior staff which show developing a black or brown colleague as a replacement (and supporting them into success) as a measurement of high performance. These KPIs should apply throughout staff tenure in the role, not as a consideration when exiting the role.
- ☐ Consider job-shares or joint appointments with local personnel. For these mechanisms to succeed, hold discussions with the identified local staff member about what they need – and over what time frame – to develop their comfort to move into a leadership role. Record these needs as a succession plan document and monitor this succession plan over time.
- ☐ Create spaces – formal and informal – that enable nascent and different forms and models of leadership to emerge, including in unexpected and unplanned ways. Recognise that developmental leadership will often not present with the qualities of conventional Western models of leadership (for example, qualities of self-promotion and performative confidence).

### Wielding Power

- ☐ If you are being supported to move into a leadership role, be open and clear with your white colleague or manager about the support you need to move into that role and take increasing responsibility for decision making. Plan together for building the skill set you need.
- ☐ As your career progresses, think about making space to mentor and support younger or less experienced black and brown colleagues, particularly in the art and skill of working white colleagues.
- ☐ **Find a mentor.** Being mentored allows for shifts in ways of working and thinking. Having a mentor helps you to step back and consider and value your own capacity. Mentoring is also useful in supporting staff through particularly challenging workplace crises; in supporting a reflection process; and in gaining a deeper understanding of your own perspectives and assumptions, and how these play a role in your decision making.
- ☐ While identifying your leadership gaps, simultaneously recognise black and brown models of leadership as legitimate, including collective leadership and servant leadership models, and promote these in your own leadership.