

## “Ambiguous”

Etymology: from Latin - ambigere "to be undecided," from ambi "around, both," and agere "to drive, do"

: able to be understood in more than one way

*Merriam-Webster*

## The challenges...

- ◆ Iterative design +
- ◆ Accelerated pace of change +
- ◆ Shifting expectations =
- ◆ Ambiguity = Anxiety =

AAAAGggggghhhh!!!

What shifts in demands  
and expectations are you  
experiencing right now?

From “above”?

From those you lead?



# What do great leaders do to manage anxiety?

In self?

In others?



In self and others...? Ease the comfort zone boundaries? \*Uncertainty FEEDS anxiety, Knowledge CALMS it."

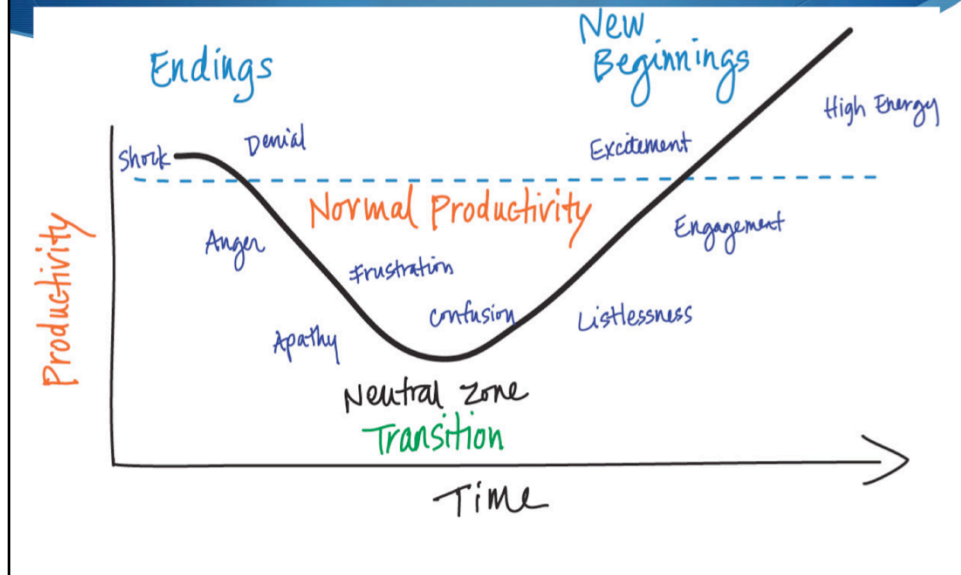
## **Self:**

- \* ask questions, gain clarification and direction where you can
- \* participate in the process
- \* use personal stress-management techniques
- \* talk with a mentor
- \* keep EQ in mind – amygdala response, time to let the frontal lobe kick in (6-8 seconds!!)

## **Others:**

- \* be as transparent and consistent as you can in your leadership
- \* "interpret" for people, and help translate what it means to them
- \* acknowledge the emotions and stress related to changing times, expectations, ambiguity, etc.
- \* provide consistent communication and updates – even if there's nothing new to report
- \* encourage their questions
- \* empower their collaboration and problem solving
- \* bring conflict into the open, help resolve it
- \* stay connected, remain accessible

# Awareness of the Change Cycle



Note stages, and emotions associated with each.

Note self vs self as leader; others – all move at their own pace...

Need different things at different stages from the leader. The challenge of moving through change together, you don't get a head start. In iterative processes, where we're literally all figuring it out as we go along, this presents new and different challenges than we're used to.

## What about you?

- ◆ How are you managing your own reactions and needs?
- ◆ What do those you lead need, and what are you doing to help?
- ◆ How are you keeping a pulse on ongoing shifts?

## So, what now?

- ◆ What additional things do you need to be doing **for yourself?**
- ◆ What additional things do you need to be doing **for and with others?**
- ◆ How do we pay more conscious ongoing attention to the quality of our relationships during times of change, ambiguity, stress?

What else should we  
consider with regard to  
leading in ambiguity?