

RAFT Leadership Call Summary March 2026

Leadership Development & Self-Management

- A participant described actively working on improving leadership skills through:
 - Tracking how time is spent, including interruptions (“displacements”)
 - Using a paper calendar and visual tools to map and manage time
 - Recognizing the need for breaks and boundaries (e.g., taking lunch, stepping away from work)
- Emphasis on distinguishing between:
 - Tasks/responsibilities that belong to them vs. those that do not
 - Personality traits vs. intentional leadership skills
- Reflection identified as a key leadership practice, but difficult to maintain when overwhelmed
- Self-accountability highlighted through:
 - Revisiting a workplace interaction
 - Acknowledging missteps while still standing by core concerns
 - Reframing challenges as opportunities for growth

Time Management Strategies

- Several practical approaches were shared:
 - Tracking interruptions to understand lost productivity
 - Time blocking without rigid expectations of completion
 - Scheduling buffer time for unexpected tasks
 - Planning only 70–80% of work capacity to allow flexibility
- Tools and techniques discussed:
 - Weekly planning systems and color coding
 - Selecting top 2–3 priorities per day

- End-of-day reflection to identify meaningful accomplishments
 - Recognition that traditional scheduling methods may not work for everyone, especially for neurodivergent individuals
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Leadership Mindset & Skills

- Key leadership qualities emphasized:
 - Self-awareness and self-leadership
 - Accountability and willingness to repair relationships
 - Knowing team members as individuals
 - Responding to performance issues with curiosity and support rather than punishment
 - Leadership seen as both:
 - An ongoing learning process
 - Something often developed informally rather than through structured support
 - Discussion of “environmental design”:
 - Structuring physical and visual spaces to support focus and memory
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Workplace Culture & Systems Challenges

- Participants described systemic challenges in the field:
 - Heavy workloads and long hours (e.g., 7am–8pm days)
 - Lack of formal leadership development structures
 - Inequities and inconsistencies in expectations across staff
 - Tension between:
 - Organizational demands
 - Desire to lead in a more intentional, values-driven way
 - Recognition that many leaders are promoted for technical skills but not trained in leadership or coaching
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Generational Shifts in Leadership

- Observations of a shift toward:
 - More human-centered leadership approaches
 - Greater emphasis on boundaries, self-care, and sustainability
 - Older leadership models described as:
 - Overwork-focused (“first in, last out”)
 - Less attentive to trauma and well-being
 - Concern that outdated leadership styles continue to be passed down unless intentionally challenged
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Visionary Leadership & Sector Change

- Discussion of the need for:
 - Clear, shared visions for the future of the field
 - New models for funding, workload, and service delivery
 - Introduction of a planned multi-day summit focused on:
 - Identifying key challenges in the field
 - Collaboratively exploring solutions
 - Recognition that while many problems are known, solutions are less clearly defined
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Workload, Burnout & Systemic Constraints

- Strong emphasis on:
 - Burnout and emotional strain in the field
 - The “helper” mindset leading to overwork and self-sacrifice
- Key tension identified:
 - Workers compensate for underfunded systems, masking the need for structural change
- Idea مطرح that reducing workloads could:
 - Improve sustainability

- Expose gaps that require systemic funding solutions
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Scheduling & Coverage Challenges

- Exploration of alternative work models:
 - Four-day work weeks with staggered schedules
 - Adjusted hours around predictable high-demand periods
 - Challenges noted:
 - Need for continuous service (e.g., crisis response)
 - Court and system constraints limiting flexibility
 - Potential solutions discussed:
 - Rotating schedules
 - Increased use of trained volunteers
 - Flexible, “work-life harmony” approach rather than strict balance
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Collaboration & Learning Across Organizations

- Value placed on:
 - Peer learning and shared leadership spaces
 - Exposure to different leadership styles and organizational models
 - Challenges in some formal spaces:
 - Limited openness due to funding or political constraints
 - Interest in more candid, supportive environments for leadership development
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Organizational Models & Advocacy

- One participant described a collaborative consortium model:
 - Multiple organizations working together with shared goals
 - Unified advocacy approach when engaging with government

- Focus on:
 - Representing member needs
 - Addressing systemic barriers (e.g., language access in courts)
 - Noted increasing difficulty due to funding constraints and budget deficits
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Key Themes Across the Conversation

- Leadership requires intentional practice, not just experience
 - Time, capacity, and reflection are foundational to effective leadership
 - Systems—not individuals—are often the root of burnout and limitations
 - There is a strong desire for:
 - More sustainable work models
 - More human-centered leadership
 - Collective problem-solving and innovation
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If you want, I can also pull out **action items, frameworks used (like “displacements”), or leadership tools mentioned** into a quick reference sheet.