

## POST-NEWTONIAN LEADERSHIP: EMERGING PATTERNS FOR WORLDLY LEADERS

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### Abstract

Western approaches to leadership are underpinned by an implicit Newtonian worldview of cause and effect. Management actions are expected to have desired outcomes. The lived reality is different: an alternative is called for. This paper examines insights from complexity theory, especially emergence and self-organization, to challenge traditional notions of control. It combines with insights from ecosystems around boundaries and disturbance to offer a profoundly different perspective for worldly leaders. In particular, it suggests an agenda where consistency of approach leads to repeating patterns, fractals, which can be observed at dispersed levels in an organization. It examines a number of applications, ranging from Southwest Airlines to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. It confronts a challenge where emergent behavior may be unethical, using insights from ecosystems. In conclusion, it offers a series of observations, which can usefully be included in leadership development agendas.

### Keywords

emergence

self-organization

fractals

ethics

worldly leadership