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LEAD 4000

Reading Notes 11/11: Trump/Paris Climate Accords

1. This speech details Trump's declaration that the US will be leaving the Paris Climate Accord. Trump seemed to be under the impression that the agreement places the US at an economic disadvantage, saying that the accord leaves Americans to "absorb the cost in terms of lost jobs, lower wages, shuttered factories and vastly diminished economic production." He goes on to say that "the United States under the Trump administration will continue to be the cleanest and most environmentally friendly country in the world." Overall, Trump felt that investing in this global agreement was not beneficial to the US.
2. This speech is related to the course because it exemplifies what ineffective leadership is. Trump engaged in isolationist tactics throughout his time in office. He truly believes in the myth of American exceptionalism. We have learned in this course that the true power of leadership lies in one's ability to foster authentic relationships. Rego and Gergen's Inclusive Ecosystems piece explicitly says that "they [relationships] represent bonds that hold things together and enable work to be accomplished over the bumpy road of difference." Trump chose to burn bridges by leaving the Accords, thus making it difficult for the rest of the world to trust the US. Trust is foundational to leadership as well, as described in Brown's Emergent Strategy piece, where they write, "...move at the speed of trust. Focus on critical connections more than critical mass—build the resilience by building the relationships."
3. My main takeaway from this speech is that leading without understanding the parameters of the wicked problem could potentially exacerbate the wicked problem. The Paris Accords is a monumental proposed solution that we have for the climate change problem. It details global accountability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and is "providing financial assistance to countries less endowed and more vulnerable" (UNFCCC). The rest of the world is practicing compassionate leadership. These countries recognize that we need to lift everyone if we want to solve this problem. What Trump failed to consider is that the collaborative effort is necessary for the benefit of US-residing folks as well. People can't access jobs if they don't have a habitable planet, and he seems to neglect that thought overall.