

The Meaning Public Service: The Allegory of the Cave

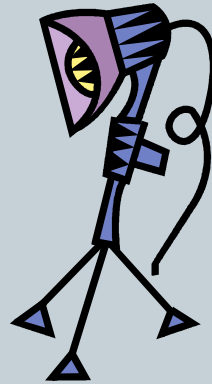


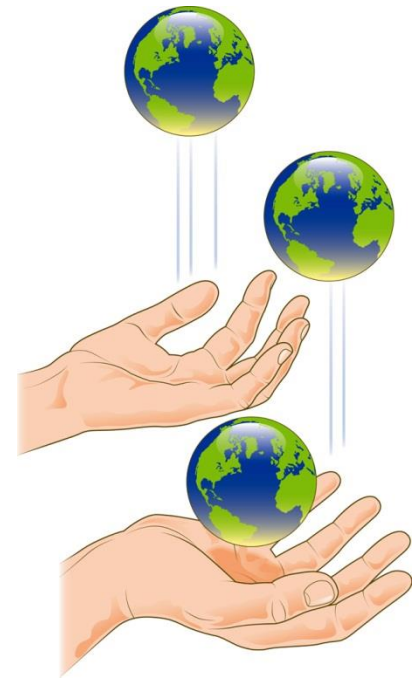
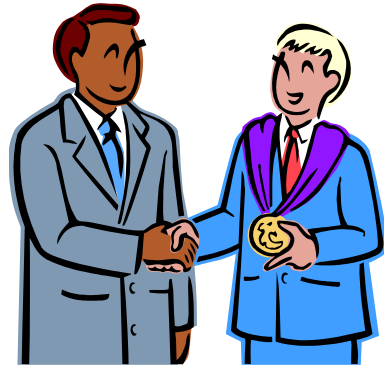
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**NCSL SYMPOSIUM FOR EMERGING LEADERS
OCTOBER 9, 2015**



Why did you run for the legislature?

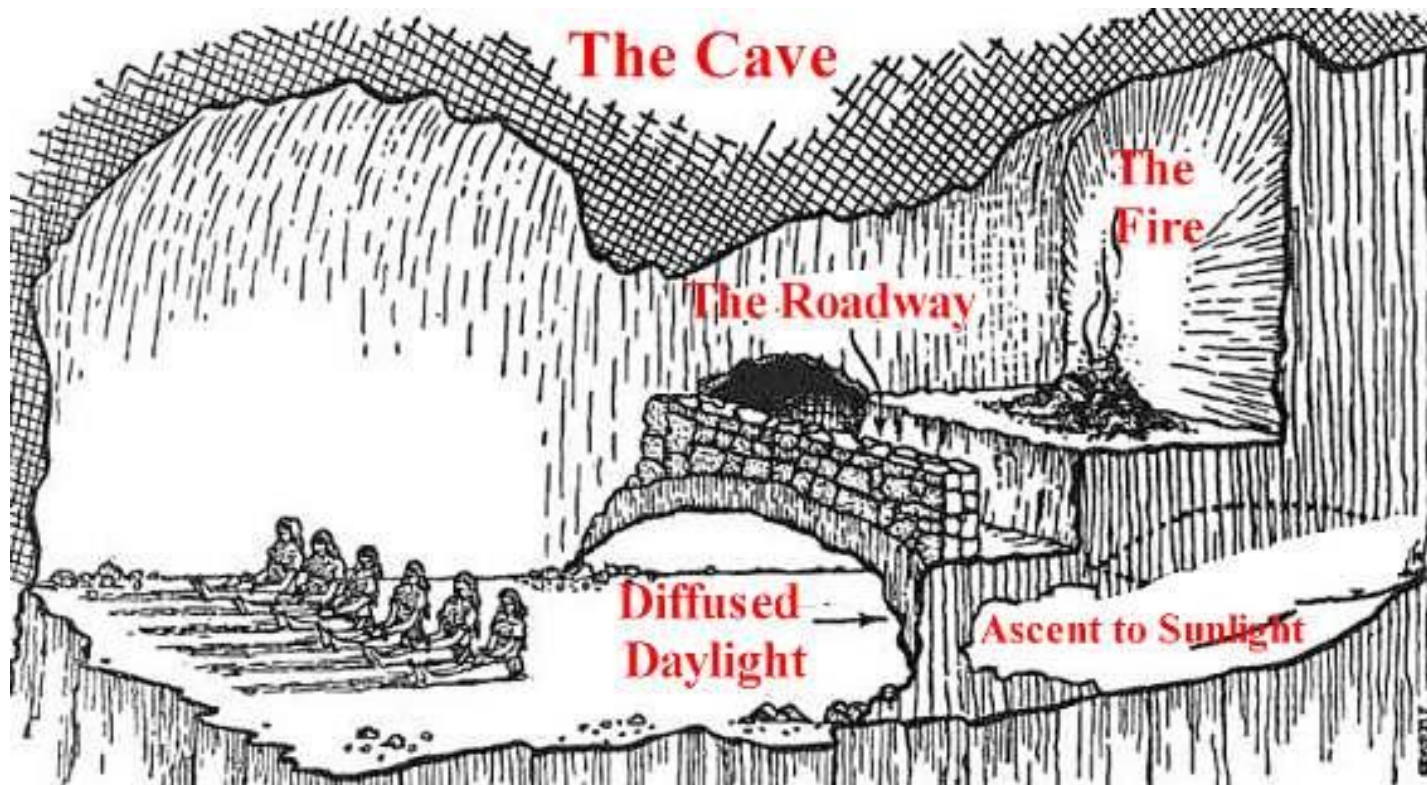






What Does it Mean to Be a Public Servant?

Plato's Allegory of the Cave



What Do you Do?



After you leave the cave- what do you do?

Are you obligated to go back into the cave?

Why or why not?

If you choose to go back into the cave, what will it be like?

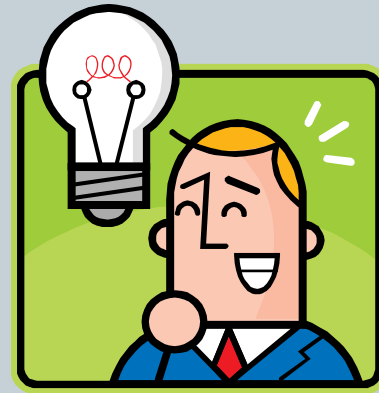
What will those in the cave think of you?

Do you try to lead the others out of the cave?

If yes, what are the challenges?

IF yes, how do you do it?

In what ways, if any,
have you been
“enlightened” since
being elected to the
legislature?





What is the biggest public policy
problems facing your state right
now?

Lets Discuss the Challenges of One of the Issues



- What do constituents believe?
- What are some hard realities?
- What are the challenges for bringing folks into those realities?
- What are the potential costs to the public servant?
- What are the potential benefits to the public servant?



“I don’t want
to be a dead
hero. I want
to be a live
me!”

Rafe
Hollister

Strategies for Leading “out of the dark”



- Identify the problem.
- Identify key stakeholders.
- Understand each one’s version of the dark.
- Educate stakeholders.
- Convene stakeholders.
- Know the risks of action. Of inaction.
- Lead!

Why Don't We Lead Out of the Dark?



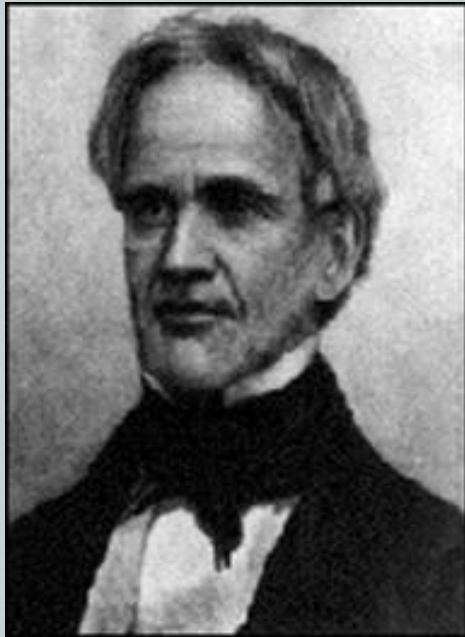
- Status Quo
- The Next Election
- Your desire to survive
- The necessity for cooperation
- Fear of Failure

Think about doing this in particular policy areas



- Education
- Health Care
- Environment
- Immigration
- Criminal Justice

The True Meaning of Public Service



“Be ashamed to die until
You have won some
victory for humanity.”

Horace Mann, Educator, Scholar,
State Senator (1796-1859)