

## The difference that makes a difference

Imagine you are a Botanist in the northern Indian state of Uttarakhand – you are standing in front of a large expanse of grassland – there are many different shades and stripes of yellow and brown, there are different heights of grasses, they are swaying in different rhythms. Thanks to your background, you can even see what species of grass they are and know the different ways they propagate. These, and much, much more, are just some of the differences you could be perceiving – but maybe noticing that one particular pattern of shades and stripes belongs to a tiger, rather than a section of grasses, could well be a difference that makes a difference!

Maybe an example closer to home?!

Every month you look at a list of the Hospital Acquired Infections for each of the 25 wards in your hospital – there will always be one that is the best and one the worst. This could simply be down to natural variation ([See Deming](#)) in which case it is simply ‘difference’. But if, on closer study, you find there are three different PPE protocols at work in the hospital that may well be a ‘difference that makes a difference’.

As leaders we are bombarded with information – including how our own or other’s behaviour is affecting things. The ability to distinguish between what is useful and what isn’t, is a basis for learning and *making a difference*, as well as noticing one.

There are innumerable leadership development theories, books and programmes available. However, at Staff College, we have distilled a core set of concepts that really do make a difference when it comes to developing leaders effectively.

Also, as a faculty that draws on leadership understanding and practice from people’s backgrounds in clinical, military and specialist professions, we are not the ‘usual suspects’ and our difference from each other creates a useful difference to how we work.