>> Hello my name is Terry Patterson. I am I guess a parent first of a young adult who is Deaf, I am hard of hearing myself. I work with Hands and Voices. I'm the director of chapter support for the organization, which means I get to work with our 42 authorized chapters and a lot of parent leaders across that come across Canada and the US. I'm also the lead on technical assistance and training and education for the family leadership and language and learning center, the FL three center if you have been hearing that. I love talking about leadership that I love learning about leadership. And as a disclaimer I am not a pilot. So none of this experience comes because I have piloting or pilot training. It comes because I found some really great stuff out there that talks about the analogy between piloting a plane and business leadership. And I like to think how does that translate to myself as a parent leader? How does that translate to the leaders I work with?

So what I would like you to think about over the next quick 25 minutes at the end of the conference, at the end of your day is in your organization, in your agency, in the teams you work with thinking about where do we stall out potentially, what are the needs, what is the process we move through leading teams. And thinking about oh, gosh, am I still sitting in the airport we haven't even begun to board. I am new at what I am doing I know my role, my flight crew is not here yet. Or maybe you are cruising along at 30,000 feet doing pretty good. We have got this, we've got the planning set, we know what the destination is. But we don't know how to land this thing. So we are going to talk to real quick on some of these different stages and some considerations. I will provide some examples but I would really like you to think what and I will ask you hopefully plan some time at the end what does it really, how does it relate to your day to day work.

It's like basics. You've got to have a plan. A pilot has to have a plan. What is his destination? when is he supposed to arrive? has he met his flight crew? has he filed all the checklists, all the paperwork he needs to do to get going somewhere? So we have flight plans. It might be a strategic plan. It might be in on boarding plan. It might be our succession plan. Our objectives that we do as part of the HRSA grants you might be funded with. So what is your flight plan. You have got to know where you are going. It is synchronizing your efforts. The pilot and copilot have to communicate with the air traffic control tower. Right, so is that hands and voices headquarters? is that the Department of Public Health? Is it the Department of Education? is it just your team and the communication you're having? It is that communication piece and making sure that maybe it is your marketing plan making sure your stakeholders know where you are going and how you intend to get there. Maybe it is your membership or your team or your employees. They want to know what is the end goal and what are the objectives and how are you going to get me there. And always maintaining your focus and frame of reference. We will talk more about that but if all a pilot does is look out the window of the cockpit at what is in front of him he is missing out on environmental conditions. He is missing out in the planes that might be passing by. He's missing out on a lot of things. So as a leader if all we are doing is watching what is in front of her face at the bottom of our nose and what we have to finish for the day we can lose our focus so it is always about reevaluating where we are going, what our focus is, what is working and what is not working.

So thinking about it, you're getting ready to take off. Hopefully it is not to play a game, but you have got to understand the tools at your disposal. What are those?is it your policies? Is it law? Is it the procedures? May be it is resources on understanding the philosophy, the mission, the vision of your organization. It is recognizing I do not have to re-create everything. What can I tap into that is already out there that is a tool at my disposal. So a pilot has got an instrument that he goes through a lot of training. I say he, they. I will say they to be a little bit more politically correct there.

 Make sure you know what you have to work with. You know where to work. The people who are coming on board your teamUnderstand where to find the information they need. Whether that be on boarding, whether that be just understanding a three-minute elevator speech for your mission or whether that is the policies and protocol of what you do for government or state-based agency. Knowing the prevailing environmental conditions. What is the weather out there? So I think we can think about that in our organization what is the climate. Take a temperature of your state, of your community, of your organization. Are you prepared to fly in sketchy weather? Are you prepared to go out and have fully back an initiative that may be it is just not a time. Maybe it is something that is in conflict with another organization, another agency out there. You have got to know where your state is after and how you fit in there. It is the collaboration. It is the partnership. Filing the flight plan. You can have a plan. We can all sit down and write these really great plans and who is in charge and by what time but if we are not communicating that with all the players whether they are our board of directors maybe it is our team of professionals. Maybe it is our early intervention team we have got to communicate that not just internally. We have got to understand where we are going and how we plan to get there with those that it is affecting. So that means our stakeholders. That means our collaborative partners. So that might be marketing materials to ensure that with hands and voices we believe the choice what is right for the child is what makes the choice right. Unbiased support. So does anybody in the hands and voices organization or anybody on the team are they able to articulate. That is what we do that is who we are. Then how are we going to go about doing that so we are ensuring that the message is being communicated not just to our people but to those we are supporting, servicing, helping. Checklists. So would you get on a plane if you're a pilot and copilot did not go through that standardized checklist of checking all the instruments, communicating with the traffic control all those things that have to be done with checking in with his team, hey are we ready for beverage service, making sure everybody is trained on safety there are lots of different ways. We have got to have a checklist so what does it do?it provides continuity, calmness because we know, okay we are going to go through this. We are used to it. It's a routine. We are comfortable with that. But it also helps you avoid missing something. Missing something important that was not accounted for. We didn't think about that. So maybe your checklist is a meeting agenda. Making sure that if everybody has received the agenda ahead of time so they have time to process that and it builds a routine that we know every time we meet whether it is bimonthly, every six months, we know we are going to receive an agenda and we are going to move through the agenda. It could be on boarding and orientation. A checklist for that. Making sure that our new people are getting all the information so they are on the same level and team with those that may have been around for 10, 20 years. We have got to have the consistency, declaring your conditions to the aircraft controller and other aircraft. I'm going to take off down the runway I've got a great idea you cannot steer the plane. You can't run the organization number one if you don't know where you are going and you are not communicating so others know what happens if the plan goes up. I mean I don't know if you heard but it's been a week or two or so ago were two planes almost collided on the runway. There was still communication with aircraft control that still happened. So are you prepared and communicating with the aircraft controller. Who is that? Maybe it is headquarters of the organization. Maybe it is HRSA. Maybe this your department of public health. The hope then you will get off the ground. Sometimes we get stuck in these different places and are not quite sure what is next. Again, thinking about where are you in the organization, where are you with the team. You have got to steer with the right controls. There are policy guidelines, procedures that we follow. It is knowing am I capable of it, can I utilize the systems that are built into my infrastructure or what do I need in order to have that infrastructure. Clear airspace. Clear airspace is knowing is communicating I know what is going on, trying to stay out of her own silos. We need to know what is going on around us weather again I know we have a varied audience so I'm trying to give examples across that but we can oftentimes get in our silos. There are several nonprofits or potential organizations that are providing early intervention supports or services to the kiddos. We have got the Department of Ed. We have got state schools. We have got got birth to three programs. To ensure they move seamlessly through one, three, six that they are connected with support systems whether that his parents or other Deaf adults or hard of hearing adults and the professionals they need. But we are not trying to duplicate services. We have got to work together so it is being aware of what others are doing in our community to work towards the same goal.

 I kind of like the whole idea of full throttle.So what it is talking about is thinking about a plane taking off. If the plane is only taking off at 80% of its power, what is going to happen? Is going to go off the runway that much quicker. We have got to commit. You have got to know that you have... you have put your plan into place. You know where you are going. You have your team around you that knows what their role is. And that you are able to say I fully commit and it is time to go. But it is also understanding as a leader, sometimes we have to stop and reevaluate. We have got people thinking about flying a plane or leading people we have similar goals we are trying to get people from one place to another. We are trying to do that safely. We are trying to help them enjoy their experience. On the plane. Where to keep them safe. So understanding if there is any risk factor that we as leaders have to understand we had to do we have an opportunity to try again to redo this. We talked, sunk cost fallacy... have you guys heard of that? We are talking about that. So that is, I know to some extent we get caught up on that. It is the phenomenon where we think we have Artie invested so much into something. A program, and activity. And objective. Money, people, time. Energy. And saying we have Artie come this far we have got to keep pushing even though it is, it might not be a waste of time, but it is not meeting our end goal. It's not getting us to the destination so it is recognizing as a leader this regulator reevaluation of your environmental conditions of what is happening you as a leader have a responsibility to say it's time to stop it's time to reevaluate I know that you spent a lot of time on that but let's look at what we want to achieve let's go back and re-focus and move forward. We have got an end goal and we have to figure out what we are doing and keep all these things focused on the end direction. And things happen, problems happen, conflict happens. And we have to change course, so understanding that we do have a backup plan. We do know that we can take an alternative route if we put the planning and time into it.

 Respecting the approved traffic pattern.So thinking about this. What does it mean? Every airport has a different plan. So a pilot can't just say okay I'm always going to hit the left runway and it's going to work. Every airport they have to respect what they are told and where they are told to go for the safety of other planes and that changes. It changes depending on what aircraft it is. It depends on what the weather is. It depends on the air-traffic amount, how heavy it is, if there is construction on a runway. And whether they want to land and get on a certain runway or not. It is not for them to decide. So as leaders the way I think about it is we are collaborating with a lot of different partners. A lot of different people. Supporting a lot of different families. That leaves room for flexibility to understand just the way I go through decision-making or the organization does when we are invited to someone else's table it is respecting that their decision-making, their prioritization, their time management, their goal setting can and is and should be different to some extent and when we are at their table understanding we have been invited --- understanding it might not be my way, but I have a responsibility as a leader to respect that to work with that. Multitasking. So think of, if you have beverage service, but your flight crew did not have a plan. Nobody talked to the flight crew on who is going to be pushing the cart. Who is going to be handing out the cookies. The pilot has not spoken or the copilot has not communicated with them. Can you imagine what beverage service would be like? this is why I like to think about teams. There has to be a communication there. The pilots have to have trust and leave their flight crew. So that they know hey I am going to watch out for your safety but if I ring the bell and I do tell you, the seatbelt is on we are having turbulence for the safety of everybody you need to return to your seats but if you have a team or flight crew that is not going to respect that or they do not know about that that is a safety issue. So maybe is not a safety issue if the board member does not know exactly why we put a certain item on agenda. We have got to know whether to communicate from the beginning to the middle all the way through with the teams. With stakeholders what if you sat on the plane and made an announcement you can say I know we are supposed to land at 330. But it is 3:25 PM right now and it does not feel like we are descending or anything. So it's not our membership with our families it's the constituents and employees. So we have to be able to manage all of these things, leading the day to day, doing the administrative working with our team, ensuring we are communicating, on boarding them, training them. There is a lot of things we have to do I'm sure you are multitasking in your mind right now. And always being prepared for the unexpected right? turbulence. We have turbulence. We have conflict. We have family emergencies. And we can at best laid plans I'm going to sit down and get through all of my emails today and a family calls and really needs your support right now. Do we say I am sorry? you are not on my checklist for today? could I call you tomorrow. We don't. And we have to understand and be prepared for that and be prepared to support our staff and our teams.

 Hopefully you arrive. I think a lot of times we get caught. And it might be smooth air. We are enjoying it, having a glass of wine up there, sitting in first class, we have got a full plate, everybody is happy, the flight crew is entertaining everybody. But we have to land. As leaders we have to have safe landings. It might be landing the project. It might be having the difficult conversation that we don't want to have. Once we get going how are we getting where we are supposed to do because we can lose track because if we are up in the air too long and we are floating and everything is good we can lose sight of where we are actually going so that is reevaluating our strategic plans. It is looking at those objectives. It is communicating and talking about, is what we are doing working? if it is not then we need to stop and look towards what does get us to the end goal, what does get us to the destination? because who wants to be rerouted to, and I do not want to offend anybody, I am just saying Fargo, when they are planning to go to Cancun?

Sometimes we end up in Fargo. And it's not always a bad thing. Maybe it is a great thing because my family is there and I have not seen them now so now I'm going to go see my family so unexpected things happen. Being prepared for that but we have got to know where we are going and we can't do that unless we have a plan for that. Landing smoothly. So thinking about the perception, that you are headed home, it is smooth it is great, you took a nap and read a book, you're almost home and you're going to see your family or go to bed and sleep for three days. And all of the sudden it is a dangerously scary bumpy landing. What are you going to remember from that flight?you are going to remember that landing. So you have an event. Everything goes smoothly. We have everything planned. But something at the end went wrong. Your interpreter unfortunately left an hour early, and you are just in the midst of having really great family engagement. Things happen, right?but then all of a sudden what is going to be remembered from that? on the flipside maybe you had a very turbulent flight. There is a lot of weather going on. You can't get out of your seat. They would not serve you. The cup of tea you were really hoping you could sit and enjoy, but then you get to your destination, the pilot says we are landing 10 minutes early, and you land and it is a smooth landing, generally that is the part that you remember. It is the ending. So talking about an event. We know what happens behind the scenes, or training. This happens, there is this emergency we are running around the food did not get delivered. Someone did not show up, the door got locked. All of these things happen the people attending the meeting, the families at the event probably did not even notice. So how do you think about how is that going to end? so how do you ensure those families have a good experience. They are not watching all of those mistakes. It's about coming together. Why are we here looking at the end goal and the destination and landing that event? it is not a one-man show. You don't want to get on your plane tonight or tomorrow morning and say well the copilot didn't show up but we are going to go anyway. It will be okay. I have got instruments. It's okay. You don't want to do that. But we often take the brunt of the leadership. Because it is hard work. It is time-consuming. It takes a lot of passion. Things happen. We have got to have a copilot or copilots. We have to have the flight crew. They are not going to stick around and fly with you the next time if you did not communicate them. If they didn't know what is my role what is my place what is my contribution to what is going on. So ensuring we are taking the time to plan because we get into those agendas pretty quick at a meeting. Are you taking the time in the beginning to check in with your flight crew to say hey, how are you doing, how are you feeling you have any questions about what we are doing and then moving to the agenda so everybody has a good frame of reference. And there is training. That's why we have conferences. Hopefully that is why you are here. There's online learning, there's webinars. There are resources. Tap into those. Know the tools that are available for you. Ask your colleagues. Spend time and energy on developing your people, your team, your self.

And with that, thank you for flying with me this afternoon. [Laughter] safe travels home. I think we have a few minutes so if you want to stay I am just curious, you know, analogies were different ways for all of you so hopefully there were some nuggets where you are like oh yeah. We need to get off the runway right now. Anybody want to share where you think you are on this flight right now?or any questions or thoughts?I know it is a lot to ask at 4:15 PM on day two. [Laughter] good?all right... I get it. Trust me I get it. I get it. Thank you. This, like I say, analogies whatever works for you to work through the process. But even if you leave or you are on the flight tonight kind of think about not that you want to think about work but really how can you think about the process of flying and getting down and where you are in the journey and think oh, flight crew. Oh, I don't have a copilot. I need a copilot. or wow, I didn't think about contacting the air traffic control. I really don't want to be that plane. So with that, thank you. Again, safe travels. There is one session left of the day. And if you go home tonight, thank you for a great conference. I hope you had a great time. I did. I will see you on the flipside.

[Applause]