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No more simple formulas

- The “single formula for national success”:
 - Free markets and open borders
 - Small government
 - Commitment to policy rules that limit discretion
- Experience of the last twenty years:
 - No simple formula
 - Discretion unavoidable
 - Grand politics matters

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First step: Recognize multiple levels

Table 1 Levels of analysis in public administration

<i>Macro-level</i>	Study of the governance strategies that are devised by leaders to advance critical national interests and the ways in which these strategies influence the overall architecture of the state.
<i>Meso-level</i>	Study of the design, consolidation, administration, and reform of specific institutions—that is, laws, organizations, programs and practices—within the state.
<i>Micro-level</i>	Study of the attitudes and behavior of officials within the state apparatus and of people who are subject to their authority. ¹

From *Strategies for Governing*

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Second step: macro-level framework

- States, leaders, and general goals
 - Internal order and legitimacy, external security and legitimacy, prosperity, survival in office, human rights
- Circumstances: the "governing environment"
 - Demography, geography, economy, technology, culture and institutions, geopolitics
- Leaders define **strategies for governing** that define priorities and major lines of policy
- The **institutional complex** of the state as the expression of strategy

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Three challenges for leaders

- **Making strategy** -- hard because:
 - Goals conflict with one another
 - Uncertainty about how best to achieve goals
 - Turbulence: conditions change quickly
 - Limits on decision-making capacity
- **Executing strategy**:
 - Designing, consolidating, running institutions
- **Adapting strategy**:
 - Ideational and institutional deconsolidation and reconstruction
 - Hard because institutions and ideas are "sticky"

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Some implications of this approach

- **Strategies are fragile and variable**
 - US: New Dealism to Reaganism to Trumpism
 - China: Maoism to Deng Xiaoping Theory to Xi Jinping Thought
- **Moments of strategic shift** are prolonged and dangerous
- **Top-level decision-making** is critically important
 - Personnel, mentalities, structures
- **Need for long time horizons**, retrospectively and prospectively

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Implications for research, teaching

- **Teaching**
 - One course on big picture and evolution of strategies
- **Research**
 - Legitimation of macro-level research and appropriate methods
- **The Canadian advantage**
 - Attention to the long view
 - eg Hodgetts and “great environmental factors”
 - And top-level decision-making
 - eg French, *How Ottawa Decides*
 - Are we “punching below our weight”?

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