

# HOST LEADERSHIP

A new Leadership Paradigm

Adapted from 'Host' by Mark McKergow and Helen Bailey, Solutions Books, 2014

business  
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# PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

- “Host”, published in 2014 provides a radical new paradigm for the way we think about Leadership.
- Traditionally, and still unconsciously, many people think of leaders as Heroes: who are smarter, work harder, and achieve more than other team members, and beat the opposition. Increasing evidence suggests that Hero Leadership is largely outdated.
- In its place Mark McKergow and Helen Bailey in “Host” propose we think of leadership as a hosting activity – drawing people together around an issue or challenge, engaging them and getting results through others – in much the same way we do when we host a party.
- The essence of Host leadership involves 6 roles and 4 behaviours, described in this presentation
- A self rating form is provided at the to help you reflect on the way you or colleagues presently lead, and explore alternative hosting leadership options

# GURU DEFINITIONS OF LEADERSHIP

“Leadership is a relationship between a leader and followers which focuses on achieving shared goals”

.... Richard Beckhard

“Effective leadership is not about making speeches or being liked; leadership is defined by results not attributes” .....Peter Drucker

# TRADITIONAL HERO LEADERSHIP

- Leaders are archtypically viewed as hero figures; powerful, mostly men, all knowing, fast, who save the day; e.g. Ceaser, Joan of Arc, Churchill, Steve Jobs.....
- This results in a homogeneous imagery of followers – kings have subjects, shepherds have flocks etc.
- Heroic leadership results in command and control style in which followers play a role of mindless foot soldiers
- Heroic leaders are a deeply embedded myth, sustained by our need for a person we trust, who inspires confidence & saves the day; Lone Ranger, Bat Man...

# OVERVIEW OF WHAT HOSTS DO - 1

- Welcoming and sustaining others is a key feature of our social life – at a personal, community, and national life
- Hosts initiate & invite others and provide hospitality
- Hosts are defined relationally – they step forward, welcome & provide for guests and then step back while guests enjoy hospitality
- The Host – Guest relationship is reciprocal and involves fulfilling guests' needs and guests respecting their host
- Hosting & hospitality is an ancient element of most cultures and spiritual traditions – Bedouins, Nepalese, as well as UK & Europe

# OVERVIEW OF WHAT HOSTS DO - 2

- Hosts step forward, then step back to create space for guests
- Leadership involves rapid succession of actions to set things up, being aware and reflecting on the impact, and identifying further options for action
- Most leadership writing is about stepping forward and ignores stepping back, which is as important
- Christianity, Judaism & Islam share story of Abraham inviting 3 men to eat who are angels & give unexpected gift to their host
- Host Leadership has been distilled into 6 core roles and 4 key behaviours – shown on next slides

# HOST LEADERSHIP DEFINED

- Host leader is someone who engages participants in a purposeful endeavour
- Includes traditional host activities
  - Inviting
  - Welcoming
  - Supporting
  - Being open
  - Sharing responsibility

# HOST LEADERSHIP ROLES



**INITIATOR** – aware of what is needed, and desired outcome (e.g. celebration, new project) then formulates ideas and plans for action



**INVITER** - uses soft power to invite others – then steps back to give guests choice to attend. Generates commitment from guests if they decide to attend



**SPACE CREATOR** – prepares space and resources for guests to create desired outcome & result. Assumes that things will unfold as unexpected occurs



**GATEKEEPER** – encourages some activities and discourages others, ensures guests involved. May eject unruly guests and decide when event to end



**CONNECTOR** - make introductions & connects guests, making sure that people are engaged, & no one left out



**CO-PARTICIPATOR** – joins in guest activities, and steps back to allow others to be served first



# HOST LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS



**Stepping Forward  
Outgoing  
Gregarious  
Behaviors**



**IN THE SPOTLIGHT** – Up front, seeks focus of attention, impact and makes things happen



**SOCIABLE WITH GUESTS** - In view and engages with everyone, but not centre of attention



**Stepping Backward  
Quiet  
Reflective  
Behaviors**



**IN THE GALLERY** – Stands back, observes & notices what is happening



**IN THE KITCHEN** – Private space, reflects, plans and prepares

# Host Leadership will become a pioneering concept of 21 century management

"Most people start leading from a heroic stance—they get things done by knowing more or working harder than anyone else. In time, the smart ones become aware that the role of the leader is more like a host than a hero—drawing people together around an issue or challenge, engaging them and getting results through others."

Mark McKergow & Helen Bailey, "Host: Six New Roles of Engagement", 2014, Solutionsbooks

# HOST LEADERSHIP ROLE RATING FORM

LEADER ROLE	% TIME NOW	OBSERVATIONS & COMMENTS	% TIME FUTURE
Initiator			
Inviter			
Space Creator			
Gatekeeper			
Connector			
Co-Participant			

# SOME QUESTIONS ?

- Are the founders and or present top management in your organisation more Hero or Host Leaders?
- What is the impact of this on people and performance?
- What do you notice if you think about how the Host Leadership model applies to you/ your organisation's leadership?
- Changing which Host Leadership role or behaviour would most help to raise engagement and performance in your organisation?

# FURTHER INFORMATION

- Read 'Host' by Mark McKergow and Helen Bailey, published by Solutions Books, 2014
- To discuss application of Host Leadership in the selection and development of leaders in your organisation contact Michael Wellin at Business Transformation

# HISTORICAL VIEW OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP!

“A leader is best when people barely know he exists.

Not so good when people obey and acclaim him. Worse when they despise him.

But of a good leader who talks little when his work is done ... they will say "We did it ourselves“ ”

*.....Lao-Tzu (601BC to 531BC)*