

# HOSTING CHANGE, OR: HOW TO TREAT CHANGE LIKE A GUEST?

A WORKSHOP AT THE  
3RD HOST LEADERSHIP GATHERING | MUNICH | JUNE 28TH 2019

facilitated by Rolf F. Katzenberger | pragmatic-teams.com

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## PLEASE NOTE

- This workshop is merely an *experiment*, an *offer*. You will evaluate it and draw your own conclusions because *you* are the experts.
- Try things out with an open mind. Dare to *not* know.
- During this experiment, always consider „Change“ to be a real, living person hosted by you – like all of your other guests. That’s why it’s written with an upper-case „C“ in this document.
- When talking about Change in this document, I’m using a generic „*they*“, because I neither know nor care whether it’s *Maria* Change or *Frank* Change.

## 1. CONNECTING WITH CHANGE

In pairs (or triples), share your thoughts about this:

*What becomes possible if you, as a host, set out to spot useful Change and amplify it – instead of being the person that is expected to define, herald, promote and manage „required changes“?*

## 2. A FEW MINUTES FOR A FEW CONCEPTS

In your current table group, review all of the following essential concepts together and check everybody is familiar with the basics. If you'd like an explanation or some background, ask your group for it. If you feel able to explain a concept, give useful answers to those questions.

If all questions are answered before the time box ends, use the remaining time to have a group discussion about what roles you don't play so often, and what positions you're not taking so often – and what might be the benefits if you changed that.

### ROLES

- Initiating
- Inviting
- Creating space
- Gatekeeping
- Connecting
- Co-participating

### POSITIONS

- In the spotlight
- With the guests
- In the gallery
- In the kitchen

### MOVEMENTS

- Stepping forward
- Stepping back

### 3. OFFERS FOR CONVERSATIONS

Please discuss these with respect to *your work environments*, and keep in mind the basic metaphor of this thought experiment: consider Change to be *a real, living person*, like the other guests.

The rules:

1. **Always take turns in suggesting the next conversation.** As an individual, keep track of how many conversations you've already suggested, so far. When a conversation is finished at your table, let the / a person with the *fewest* suggestions so far make the next choice for a conversation.
2. **Write the number (see below) of your current conversation on a large sticky note** and keep the note at the center of your table group, so people outside of your table group can see easily what conversation you are having, without having to interrupt the group.
3. **Slowly enrich the wall of conversation harvests:** whenever your conversation produces an insight, write it down *immediately* on a sticky note. Before you switch to the next conversation, stick all insights to the harvest wall, under the respective conversation number. The harvest wall will grow and ultimately be photographed and shared with all participants of the gathering.
4. As a table group, **do your own timekeeping for every conversation.** If the group prefers „*enough, let's move on*“: turn to the next conversation when everybody signals their „Enough!“. If the group prefers time-boxes instead: use e.g. a smartphone for countdowns...
5. The **Law of Mobility** applies: when you feel you could contribute or learn more elsewhere, have a look at the conversations at the other tables (numbers are in the centers) and move there, if you like. You might also form a tiny group of two chairs... ..or give the current harvest at the harvest wall a glance, and be inspired...

**Rebel groups are allowed to change all rules on the fly – as long as their conversations produce harvests.**

#### HOST LEADERSHIP ROLES

##### INITIATING

- 1 What makes you realize that an unknown Change has entered your work environment?
- 2 How do you spot what is needed, and see emerging *desire lines*?
- 3 How do you acknowledge that Change is the expert for their own situation?

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1 A *desire line* is a visible path created by people repeatedly walking it – and it's different from the official paths that e.g. landscape architects try to impose on people

## INVITING

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- 4 How do you invite Change *early*, even if you cannot possibly know them in advance?
- 5 How do you invite Change with a *question*, to a *conversation* that matters?
- 6 What do you do when Change *declines* your invitation?

## CREATING SPACE

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- 7 Which types and what amount of *ma*<sup>2</sup> exist between you and Change?
- 8 How long do you enjoy „living the question“<sup>3</sup> with Change?
- 9 What manifestations of the *Pac-Man Rule*<sup>4</sup> exist in your work environment?

## GATEKEEPING

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- 10 How do you respect the *equality* of Change – what and who they are?
- 11 How do you *spot* and collect *emergent* ideas and rituals, instead of conceptualizing „ant country“?
- 12 How do you use containers for content, but not for containment?

## CONNECTING

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- 13 How do you get to know the „walk“ of Change, the story how they became what they are now?
- 14 How do you connect with Change, instead of managing (your) change?
- 15 How do you get to know the uninvited Change you didn't see coming?

## CO-PARTICIPATING

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- 16 How do you become a *contributor* to Change, not just a *provider* of resources?<sup>5</sup>
- 17 How do you spot and forego your *privileges*, the ones that Change does not have?
- 18 What can you do for Change, to help it feel less like an expat?

2 *ma* (間) is a Japanese concept of an appreciative, empty space or phase between things or events, that allows for letting go what was, and becoming open for something different. In *Host Leadership*, an example would be the *stairs* you are taking before you are „in the gallery“.

3 From *Letters to a Young Poet*, by Rainer Maria Rilke: „You are so young, so much before all beginning, and I would like to beg you, dear Sir, as well as I can, to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.“ (<http://www.carrothers.com/rilke4.htm>)

4 „When standing as a group of people, always leave room for 1 person to join your group. More memorably, stand like Pac-Man! 🍷“ - Eric Holscher (<https://www.ericholscher.com/blog/2017/aug/2/pacman-rule-conferences/>)

5 I owe this distinction to Jasenka Gojšić (<https://www.isoropia.hr/en/home/>)

## HOST LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

### IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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- 19 How do you ensure your conversation with Change has a *center*, but not sides?
- 20 How do you listen to the song *of Change*, instead of having it sing Karaoke to *your* lyrics?
- 21 How do you make spotlights work as *campfires*?

### WITH THE GUESTS

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- 22 How do you make Change feel comfortable with your presence?
- 23 How much attention does Change deserve, with respect to the other guests?

### IN THE GALLERY

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- 24 How far above is your gallery, *actually*?
- 25 How do you tell apart Change and pinch points?
- 26 How do you want to be talked to by Change, when it acts as your spotter<sup>6</sup>?

### IN THE KITCHEN

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- 27 How do you make time for one-on-ones with Change?
- 28 How are you going to learn and master „Cuisine à la Change“ when you’re so used to sharpening *your* saw?
- 29 Who are the mutual friends that could introduce you to a Change yet unknown?

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6 Your *proxy* in the gallery, if cannot – or don’t want to – be in the gallery yourself

## 4. YOUR CONCLUSIONS?

Do a quick brain dump here: jot down, scribble, sketch-note...



...things you'd like to think more about, once you're back home...



...things you'd like to try out at work...



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