Servant-Leadership in Crisis Situations
4 May 2015

SERVUS
Servant-Leadership Centre for Research and Education

VU
Etymology

**crisis (n.)**

early 15c., from Latinized form of Greek *krisis* "**turning point in a disease**" (used as such by Hippocrates and Galen), literally "judgment, result of a trial, selection," from *krinein* "to separate, decide, judge," from PIE root *krei-* "to sieve, discriminate, distinguish" (cognates: Greek *krinesthai* "to explain;" Old English *hriddel* "sieve;" Latin *cribrum* "sieve," *crimen* "judgment, crime," *cernere* (past participle *cretus*) "**to sift, separate;**" Old Irish *criathar,* Old Welsh *cruitr* "sieve;" Middle Irish *crich* "border, boundary").

Transferred non-medical sense is 1620s in English. A German term for "mid-life crisis" is *Torschlusspanik,* literally "shut-door-panic," fear of being on the wrong side of a closing gate."
Active listening skills

> Leaders need to be capable of recognizing both soft and hard signals identifying appropriate modes of communication, through active listening. Leaders need to easily identify the relevance of what they observe and hear, being aware of the vulnerability and sloppy management in complex systems. Central to these leadership skills are those of recognizing what are the relevant “noises” emanating from the complex pattern of interactions, what an operator on a BP oil rig in the North Sea once described as “the singing in the wires” (Marsh, 2007).
Four Corporate Cultures

- Egalitarian
- Hierarchical

- Person
- Task
The infinity loop for innovation

Egalitarian

Hierarchical

Person

Task
From Invention to Intention
From Invention to Intention

**Egalitarian**
- **INITIAL STRENGTHS:**
  - Creative
  - Flexible
- **WEAKNESS:**
  - Anarchy
  - Chaos

**Heirarchical**
- **INITIAL STRENGTHS:**
  - Loyalty/Commitment
  - Strong Leadership

**LEADERSHIP CRISIS**
From Intention to Invasion
INITIAL STRENGTHS:
LOYALTY/COMMITMENT
STRONG LEADERSHIP

WEAKNESS:
COUNTRYCLUB
CENTRALIZATION

INITIAL STRENGTHS:
STRATEGIC
TASK ORIENTATED
CUSTOMER FOCUSED

Person

Task

Egalitarian

Hierarchical

CRISIS

From Intention to Invasion

From Intention to Invasion

Trompenaars Hampden-Turner
From Invasion to Implementation
From Invasion to Implementation

**Egalitarian**

**INITIAL STRENGTHS:**
- STRATEGIC
- CUSTOMER FOCUSED

**WEAKNESS:**
- SWEATSHOP
- SHORT TERMISM

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**Hierarchical**

**INITIAL STRENGTHS:**
- EFFICIENT
- STRUCTURED

**CRISIS OF CONTROL**
From Implementation to Innovation
From Implementation to Innovation

Egalitarian

INITIAL STRENGTHS:
LEAN PROCESSES
STRUCTURED

WEAKNESS:
BUREAUCRACY
INFLEXIBLE

Hierarchical

CRISIS OF RED TAPE

Person

Task

INITIAL STRENGTHS:
CREATIVE
CLIENT IS KING
Exnovation!
Program

13.30 Opening by Prof. mr. dr. Jaap W. Winter, Chair of Executive Board, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

13.40 Contextualizing the symposium theme: prof. dr. Fons Trompenaars and dr. Sylvia van de Bunt

14.10 Beating the odds: A story of pain and success from the land of Sheba, by Prof. dr Nabil Sultan, Dean of the College of Business Administration, A'Sharqiyah University, Ibra, Oman

15.00 Workshops

16.00 Refreshments in the gathering space outside Symposium Hall, Room 12A-00

16.30 Emotional abuse and neglect in the workplace: the case of GVB, the Amsterdam public transport company, by dr Joost Kampen, management consultant Van de Bunt Amsterdam

16.50 Panel discussion with workshop leaders, delegates and MA students

17.20 Reflections by Fons Trompenaars, and future perspective for research and practitioners.

17.30 Closure
SYMPOSIUM WORKSHOPS 15.00-16.00

WORKSHOP I (15A-00): 
*Storytelling on Forgiveness after the Second World War*, by Judy Mensch of the Corrie ten Boom Foundation

WORKSHOP II (9A-32): 
*Effective Decision Making in Crisis Situations*, by Egbert Mulder MSc. Director YIC

WORKSHOP III (2A-16): 
*Emergency operations and the serving role of communicative leaders*, by Dr. ir. Kees Boersma, Associate Professor Crisis Management, Faculty of Social Sciences, VU University Amsterdam

WORKSHOP IV (9A-29): 
*Crisis management and different lenses on the World*, by Johan Poelman MSc, Housing cooperation, www.innergo.nl and Jeffrey Schwerzel MSc. Majoor at KMA, Military Services Breda

WORKSHOP V (7A-02): 
*When Crisis is Opportunity in Chinese organisations*, by Dr. Mandy Cao, CEO CHEER China
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Servant-Leadership across Crisis Situations

• Historical perspective; on inspiration and hope
• Workplace bullying
• Crisis leadership and active listening skills
• The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
• The Kafka button
• Discussion Statements
Anne Frank, a history of hope

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

— Anne Frank
1929-1945
Workplace bullying
Social in- and exclusion
The West-Eastern Divan Orchestra
Peacebuilding in Middle-East
Call for VU community building
In times of bureaucracy

The Kafka Button
DISCUSSION STATEMENTS
Discussion STATEMENT 1:

Do crisis situations require a different kind of leadership?
Which Servant-Leadership qualities are most important in moments of crisis?
Do these qualities of leadership in crisis vary across cultures?
Thank you!