

About Hostmanship

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Hostmanship Inc¹

*serves all who wish to develop the ability to make
people feel welcome.*

*We do this by offering Inspiration, Competence,
and Tools for Hostmanship.*

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About Hostmanship

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¹ The Hostmanship, Inc=Vårdskapet AB. (Translator's Note)

A Welcoming World

*We yearn for a world where people
feel expected and welcome.*

*A world where children, friends, strangers,
guests, customers, and coworkers dare
to meet each other without thinking of
religion, color, sex, or age.*

*We believe that this is something
fundamental for lasting and true
success for us as persons, for our
companies, our places, and finally
for our common home, the Earth.*

Imagine a world where everybody is equally welcome.

Where we meet each other without thoughts of where we come from. This sounds like a dream, we know this. But many of us share this dream today. Many, who believe that there should be no difference in how people are received. But there is a big difference. It matters who you are in this world, where you come from, how old you are, and if you are a woman or a man.

We call our dream 'the dream of a welcoming world'.

A world where we bring forth the best in ourselves, where our talents and personalities are cherished, where we are free to meet each other as the human beings we are, and to see that which unites us instead of seeing that which divides us.

The road to this place goes via Hostmanship.

Hostmanship

Hostmanship is the art of making people feel welcome. Meetings, where genuine hospitality is present and has its origin in that person, that organization, or that place that has invited you.

But exercising good Hostmanship unfortunately does not go hand-in-hand with the external rules we have learned to live with.

Good Hostmanship means understanding the art of serving and realizing how it enriches our lives.

As opposed to Service, Hostmanship is to be there for the benefit of another human being and to see what is best just for her. In this manner, Hostmanship may best be compared to a way of viewing life.

Hostmanship is to travel light. To carefully pack what is really important and to leave a great deal behind. To give oneself a new kind of freedom, a freedom reaching out to everyone you meet. Where the person in front of you first is a human being.

In Hostmanship, words are carefully chosen. We do not say one thing and mean another, do a third, only to then be forced to compromise.

In Hostmanship, we start by listening to the person before we as individuals make decisions in an organization consisting of other individuals who all live together in a world populated by human beings.

The Stages of Hostmanship

Good Hostmanship is performed on different stages. But only those of us who are actors know on which stage the meeting will be held.

For a person we meet they are all derived from one whole, together shaping the impressions she brings back with her.

The core of Hostmanship is the personal Hostmanship. What I, as a person, offer everyone I meet. The next stage is the Hostmanship of the function, the Hostmanship with which we, as a department or group, greet everyone. A Hostmanship that also other coworkers and units within our organization can be a part of.

The third stage is the entire organization. How do we act as the whole we say we are? How do we assume responsibility for each other and serve everyone? This stage is in many ways as easy to identify as the Personal Hostmanship, but requires a spirit of openness and responsibility that reaches far beyond us as individuals.

The fourth stage, then, involves more than the organization itself. It is partly a geographic place, like a city or another limited area. But it is not just the map that determines, but more so in what context we act. All companies that are part of a larger organization depend on the Hostmanship of the organization. Many also belong to a certain branch, and then the entire industry is of interest.

Then, at last, the largest stage of all, where we act as citizens.

The Foundations of Hostmanship

In order to be able to exercise and offer Hostmanship, each leader and coworker, activity and place must be illuminated by the Foundations of Hostmanship.

Six fundamentals being expressed when we meet people.

The six fundamentals are: Service, Unity, Dialogue, Responsibility, Consideration, and Knowledge.

The road to Hostmanship leads through the six fundamentals of Hostmanship. Six ways to express oneself, which characterizes a person or activity when meeting others.

One comparison is to describe these foundations as the strings of a guitar. Where I, as individual, or we, as an organization create the music. In order for a chord to sound nice, all six strings have to be tuned. Sure, if one string breaks during a concert, you can carry on for a while, but no musician will enter the stage with only five strings.

On the other hand, it makes no difference what you play on the guitar, if it is classical music, blues, or hard rock. What matters is that the guitar is tuned, then the music becomes the Hostmanship we offer the rest of the world.

1. Service

We use our talents and experiences to the benefit of someone else. We meet each human being with thoughts of how we can make life easier for her. We recognize that all our actions are meant to serve those around us, and that our places serve the people who live and work there, plus all those who have chosen to visit them today and tomorrow.

Serving someone else is an often misunderstood art in the times we live in. Being misled, we have begun to believe that service is the same thing as voluntarily act as a doormat, to let someone “place himself above” and let us “sit below” the other person.

Let us now reclaim the word and return to it its proper meaning. To serve is to be there for someone else. To listen, to understand, and to ask oneself: “What can I do to make you feel better right now?” To help someone reach their goals and thus become successful in life.

A characteristic of the serving organization is that it has a serving leadership. Leaders who serve their employees. Where they primarily care about the world and daily life of their employees, so that the employees themselves shall feel free enough to serve when meeting others.

2. *The Big Picture*

We see and we understand the larger context.

*We see what the person we meet sees and we meet
her as an ambassador for the big picture
she perceives of us.*

When she meets our organization, she sees only one picture, and part of that picture are all those of us who work there as well. The person who meets the guest is always representative of the entire business, right then, right there.

But the unity we represent may also extend to parts of other organizations we depend on. It may pertain to the guest's ability to find a parking space, the appearance of retailers in the media, or the actions of the government. Understanding the big picture is seeing it all in front of us, the picture meeting the guest who chooses to somehow visit us. And even if we cannot be held responsible for all that happens within this unity, it is important that we understand that it is the guest's perception of the big picture that affects the meeting with us.

3. Dialogue

*We seek understanding and agreement.
We listen not only to the words, but also to
the entire person, and we dare opening ourselves
up to diversity. We receive critique as the gift it is
and are thankful for the confidence by ignoring
pre-conceived notions, and we use our courage
to understand all aspects of a problem.*

In order to be able to carry on a dialogue, we must first learn to listen, which often is the biggest obstacle to solving a problem. We human beings cling tightly to our deep-rooted patterns and pre-conceived notions. We always believe that one plus one is two, and often answer before we hear the end of the question.

There are three ways to meet a person, when a problem occurs. One, we can enter into a debate and explain that the other party is wrong. Two, we can choose a discussion and convince her that we are right, or three; we can listen and try to understand the context while beginning a dialogue.

Opening up to a dialogue at each meeting means taking everybody seriously. Seeing the unique in every person is trying to find the understanding within ourselves.

4. Responsibility

*We take responsibility for our actions,
which means that we stand by our ways
to react and relate to all that happens to us.
We take responsibility for the world
that is ours, and we dare meeting people
with our entire essence, without blaming
circumstances or other people.*

Taking responsibility means using our courage. It is unrealistic to feel responsible for all that happens in the world; on the other hand, we always take responsibility for how we choose to react to what happens. We may choose between taking the matter seriously or blaming someone else, we may choose to learn something, or to walk away unaffected.

To carry responsibility is not the same as being loyal. Loyalty is based on sticking to rules of behavior and doing as we are told. Really taking responsibility is instead putting ourselves on the side of the other party and helping to improve the world we live in. A choice perhaps not always very appreciated by our organization, but which in the end creates stronger and more personal meetings.

5. Consideration

We dare using our hearts and we search for the human being inside ourselves and see the human being in others. We trust our friendly instincts regardless of whom we meet or where the meeting takes place. Consideration is the heart of Hostmanship. An empathetic, considerate person easily becomes a good host. For her, it seems natural to take care of others and to look out for someone's best interests. Therefore, it's easy to release the human in ourselves and to meet all others first of all as fellow human beings.

This may seem a little strange: certain environments, certain systems may sometimes appear as if they are prepared for everything but for a human being. As if the meeting only is meant to take place in theory, not in practice. A considerate system, on the other hand, never forgets whom the system serves, and that this recipient most likely will act just as human beings usually act.

To let consideration rule in an activity is seeing the human side in those who seek us out. To design our systems, our culture with the realization that we are all human beings, both those who work there and those we meet.

6. Knowledge

We meet a human being where she is and understand that, what she understands.

We gratefully and humbly carry our knowledge and serve her when we use it.

We open up to all cultures and people, regardless of background.

Good knowledge of our product is a given when it comes to Hostmanship. We know what we do and why we do it.

But having knowledge is something far greater than this. Utilizing Hostmanship is also building a culture where we constantly learn things that enrich our experiences. This applies as much to a personal Hostmanship as to an activity. A culture where each question is taken seriously and where the important thing is not always the answer, but who asks it.

Knowledge is understanding what the recipient understands, seeing what she sees, and beginning exactly there. Thus, Hostmanship is largely about meeting the person from her perspective. To curiously take in the entire person and then answer the questions she asks.

Knowledge is thus far more than just knowing, it is the ability to use our knowledge in unison with someone's needs.

The Rewards of Hostmanship

*The result of good Hostmanship is spelled as PRIDE.
The feeling we bring back with us after a meeting
where Hostmanship has been present. Pride is a
positive power which can grow strong inside everyone,
regardless of if it comes from one's own work or the
place where we work*

When everything is right, there is Hostmanship. A sign of this is that the host instantly is overcome by pride. The one we have met is not just pleased, she has had all her needs met and is on her way out in the world as a stronger person.

Pride is love's sister and one of the most beautiful feelings a person can have. It shows itself in the corner of the eye when we burn for something, or settles in our chest when we look out over the area we love. Times where words don't seem enough, at the same time as we wish all those we meet would feel the same.

Pride is feeling relief, experiencing how the steps kind of lift us up from the ground, and never doubting that we are in the right place, at the right time, in the right environment.

Hostmanship is pride in action. A growing satisfaction we carry with us.