



# Invitational Leadership - the future of leadership

*Invitational Leadership* is a model drawn from Invitational Theory, originally located within an educational setting. It offers a vibrant and practical framework in which to understand, practice and develop leadership at both a personal and corporate level. Keith has taught Invitational Leadership at various local and international business schools including the Asia Pacific Leadership Program (Hawaii), Tsukuba University MBA program (Tokyo) and GIBS (as part of Strategic Leadership modules). *Invitational Leadership* synchronises well with Ron Heifetz's (Harvard) *Adaptive Leadership* model.

The presentation of *Invitational Leadership* poses the question: **"How can I be a great Leader?"**

In order to answer this question Invitational leadership then explores **5 key questions**:

1. *What is the Leader's **context**?*
2. *What is the Leader's **task**?*
3. *What is the Leader's **metaphor**?*
4. *What does the Leader **measure**?*
5. *What is the Leader's **challenge**?*

Each of these five areas are then looked at through two specific lenses:

The past 100 years – what got us here?

The emerging future – where are we heading?

(The Chinese believe that the further one 'looks back' the further one can 'look forwards'). Knowing 'where we have come from' in the leadership context is important to understanding where it is we need to go, and how best to get there.



See the world through other people's eyes

A critical tipping point in the presentation is the realisation that order is possible without control and that the new (scary) reality is that leaders are not 'in control'.

The presentation explores the new emerging world of work in which leaders need to lead as well as offering insights concerning the disruptive change drivers underpinning this change.

Having explored these five areas we come full circle back to our initial question: How can I be a great Leader?

At this point we can exit (if there is only 60 – 90mins) or it is possible to then workshop the new skills leaders need in each of the five areas. This then allows for practical discussion around the skill-sets leaders of the future will require. This offers the participants the opportunity to identify and peg the specific skill-sets / core competencies they (be that personal or collectively) need when it come to leadership. This can be compared to existing programmes and processes within their company.

A highly recommended follow-up to the Invitational Leadership framework would be to schedule a full workshop, ***Rethinking Leadership: The Practice of Everyday -Leadership*** - which indentifies personal leadership styles and behaviours. The framework employed in this workshop setting is that of the 'Enneagram' and further information can be provided. This workshop offers a framework for growing and developing leadership at a personal level and, in Keith's experience, is the one framework that is best able to transcend the East / West barrier when it comes to understanding and translating this subject.



**Keith Coats** is a founding partner of TomorrowToday and has vast international experience in consulted and teaching strategy including places such as China, Japan, Russia, Sweden, United States and South Africa. Keith helps companies and leaders understand why our approach to strategy has to change and what to do about it.

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