

# Lightning Rod!

A leader's guide to  
becoming a  
positive conduit for  
group energy

Thursday June 16 3:15 - 4:15



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*Colliding ideas...sparking action*


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Our passion is  
helping our clients to  
grow **healthy &  
innovative** organizations




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## Learning Assumptions




1. You are here to learn. Learning requires reflection as much as new information. This session is an opportunity to reflect together.
2. There is (at least) 'one thing' you will take away. It is up to you to discover what that is!
3. We believe you are here because you are a leader.


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## Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century



10%  
**Formal**



20%  
**Social**



70%  
**Embedded**

“Education is what people do to you. Learning is what you do to yourself. Focus on being connected, always learning, fully aware and super present.”  
~Joi Ito, Director of MIT Media Lab

4 **Source of 70/20/10:** Centre for Creative Leadership & Adult Learning Practices



## Content Objectives

### Objective 1:

- Collectively explore new leadership metaphors together.

### Objective 2:

- Introduce a tool that can support you in becoming a conduit of group energy (AIR Framework).






VUCA



Volatile  
Uncertain  
Complex  
Ambiguous


“We look at the world through a lens, which we call VUCA, which stands for “**Volatile, Unstable, Complex, and Ambiguous.**” So you can say, “It’s a very tough world”, or you can say, “It’s a world that’s changing fast, and we can help consumers navigate through it.”

7 Source: Keith Weed, Unilever Chief Marketing and Communication Officer during an interview with Forbes Magazine.



What’s changed? Navigating the whitewater world

“...learn how to read the context, and to be able to respond immediately and read through what’s happening beneath the surface from the signals on top of the surface. You are living in a whitewater world...”



8 ~John Seely Brown



What is the first word that pops into your mind when you hear the word 'Leader'?

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We have old leadership programming that is impeding our ability to lead in the whitewater world.

“Most ailing organizations or teams have developed a functional blindness to their own defects. They are not suffering because they cannot resolve their problems but because they cannot see their problems. The leader cannot see the connections.”

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~ John Gardner, Author



 From change **DRIVEN** through:

- Hierarchy
- One way communication - 'Tell' the Future Story
- Motivate with Burning Platform Metaphor (Fear)
- Cascading down
- Leaders focus on others changing
- Trial and Error (blame frame)

**Impact:**

- Stagnation
- Declining engagement
- Rise in mental health issues
- Lost potential

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To change **FUELED** through:

- Networks
- Co-create the future story
- Motivate with Burning Ambition (Purpose/passion)
- Whole system engagement
- Leaders focus on changing themselves
- Trial and Learning (growth frame)
- Interactive communication

**Impact:**



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The solution: Deep knowing

“The starting point is to recognize what outdated leadership styles we are clinging to. We still rely too much on the scientific management method and the heroic leader. This mold must be broken.”

~Rosie Steeves, *Breaking the Leadership Mold*.

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## Competing commitment

**“Even as they hold a sincere commitment to change, many people are unwittingly applying productive energy toward a *competing commitment*. The resulting dynamic stalls the effort in what looks like resistance but is in fact a kind of personal immunity to change.”**

~ Robert Kegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey

Source: ‘The real reason people won’t change’. Harvard Business Review, November 2001.

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## Let’s discuss moving:

### From:

The ‘great one’;  
heroic; command-  
and-control;  
autocratic



### To:

Exploring  
‘Grounded  
leadership’.  
Positive conduit  
for group energy



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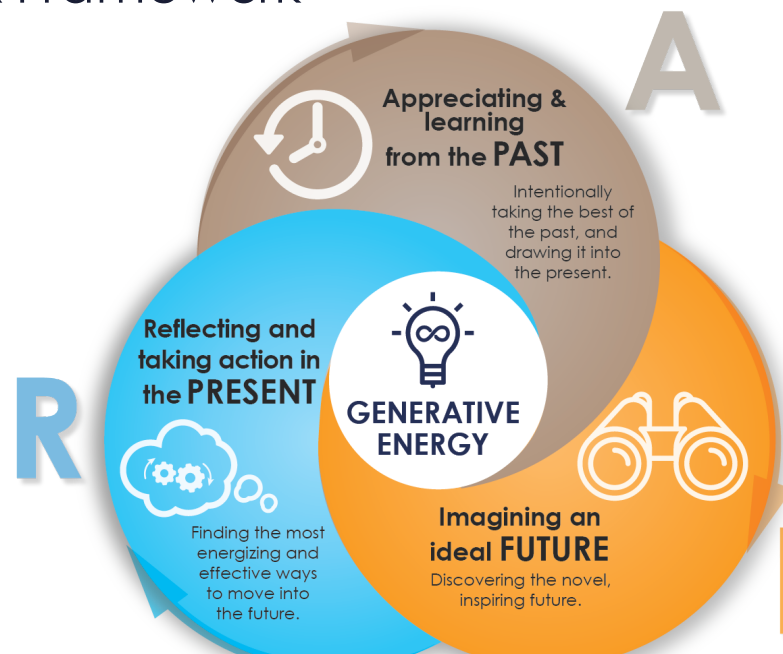
## Topic: A lightning rod:

1. **Channels powerful energy** when needed
2. Patiently waits, providing a sense of **presence and security**
3. Is **dependable** and not easily corroded by external pressures
4. Remains **invisible** - frequently taken for granted

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## AIR Framework



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## Exploring high-risk times when you were 'grounded'

Think of a time when you took a risk. This might be a *time when you had an interaction you'd been worried about but had a good outcome, or a decision you made that was uncertain and risky at the time, but in retrospect was highly valuable.*

Tell your partner of the story surrounding that risk.

- What insight or value did you gain from this risk?
- What contributed to the positive outcome?
- What helped you 'stay the course' through this risk?

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## Key ingredients to being grounded

Based on the stories you just told, what would you say are the key ingredients of being a grounded leader?

Find 2-3 key ingredients, put them on Post-it notes, prepare to share.



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## I - Imagine Yourself a Year from Now and You are Grounded

What is it is that you would be doing or saying or being to demonstrate that you are grounded.

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R - What is **one thing** you will do now, that will help you be a more grounded leader?



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“Our world’s bright future will be built by people who have discovered that leadership is the enabling art. It is the art of releasing human talent and potential.” ~Stephen R. Covey



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My role, particularly in recent years, has more often than not been that of a **facilitator** or an **enabler**.

~Richard Branson