

# Equivalent Leadership enables a Bold and Ambitious Housing Sector

“In an organisation which has a clear culture, confidence in the competence of its staff and managers and objectives shared by all, managers can let go to enable staff to operate creatively and intelligently within it.”

## ... and Requires Followership

- > “Clarity of purpose, style and objectives, a culture of competence and quality shared by all
- > “Enabling every problem to be resolved in a way which develops other people’s ability to handle it and allows maximum use of people’s own creativity and flair.”

## Equivalent Leadership

- > Why I am talking about this
- > Doctoral Thesis written while I was a LA CEO
- > Demonstrate the value of continuous learning and interchange between research and practise
- > Genuinely explore an other way for leadership practise
- > Ensure that an alternative to command and control is underpinned by accredited research.
- > Need to find a better name.

## A Short History of Leadership

- > God
- > King            Seafare   Admirals, Captains    Gold Braid
- > Dukes           Warfare   Officers, Gentlemen   Sticks/Buttons
- > Serfs            Captains of Industry            Bullet points
- > Peasants        Production line workers        Education Act
- > Owners of the means of production!!!!    Brains
- > Innovative creative independent practitioners. Leaders

## People employed for their ability to think, decide, challenge and act... not comply.

- > Equivalence is a contract..... which includes performance management, with responsibilities on both 'sides'.
- > Just Culture, accountability and peer review, not no-blame
- > Equivalence is about adult-adult interactions.
- > Transactional Analysis Key....all interactions!
- > Is dependant upon competence, culture, shared values, mission and standards.
- > Culture is what we tolerate.
- > Like mother/fatherhood and apple pie, easy to agree with.

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# Transactional Analysis Berne

> Controlling Parent

Nurturing Parent

Adult - Adult

Rebellious Child

Creative Child

## Implementing Equivalent leadership

- > Undoing the habits of a lifetime, literally
- > Social constructivism.....Hands up who has never used the words and phrases:  
bullet points, officers, above my pay grade, hold fire, the troops are revolting, front line staff, chains of command, spans of control, nitty gritty.
- > Leaders are not leaders without followers
- > Do we send people on followership development programmes
- > Needs agreement or is command and control by another name

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## What's the Point of Equivalence?

- > “it is essential we get some clarity about our destination and aspirations as a nation as we exit the EU and some brave, principled political,(and managerial) leadership.”
- > “where many communities need revitalising, **fleet of foot and innovative housing** associations are best placed to play the key role in building communities where people want to live.” Stuart Ropke, November 2017.



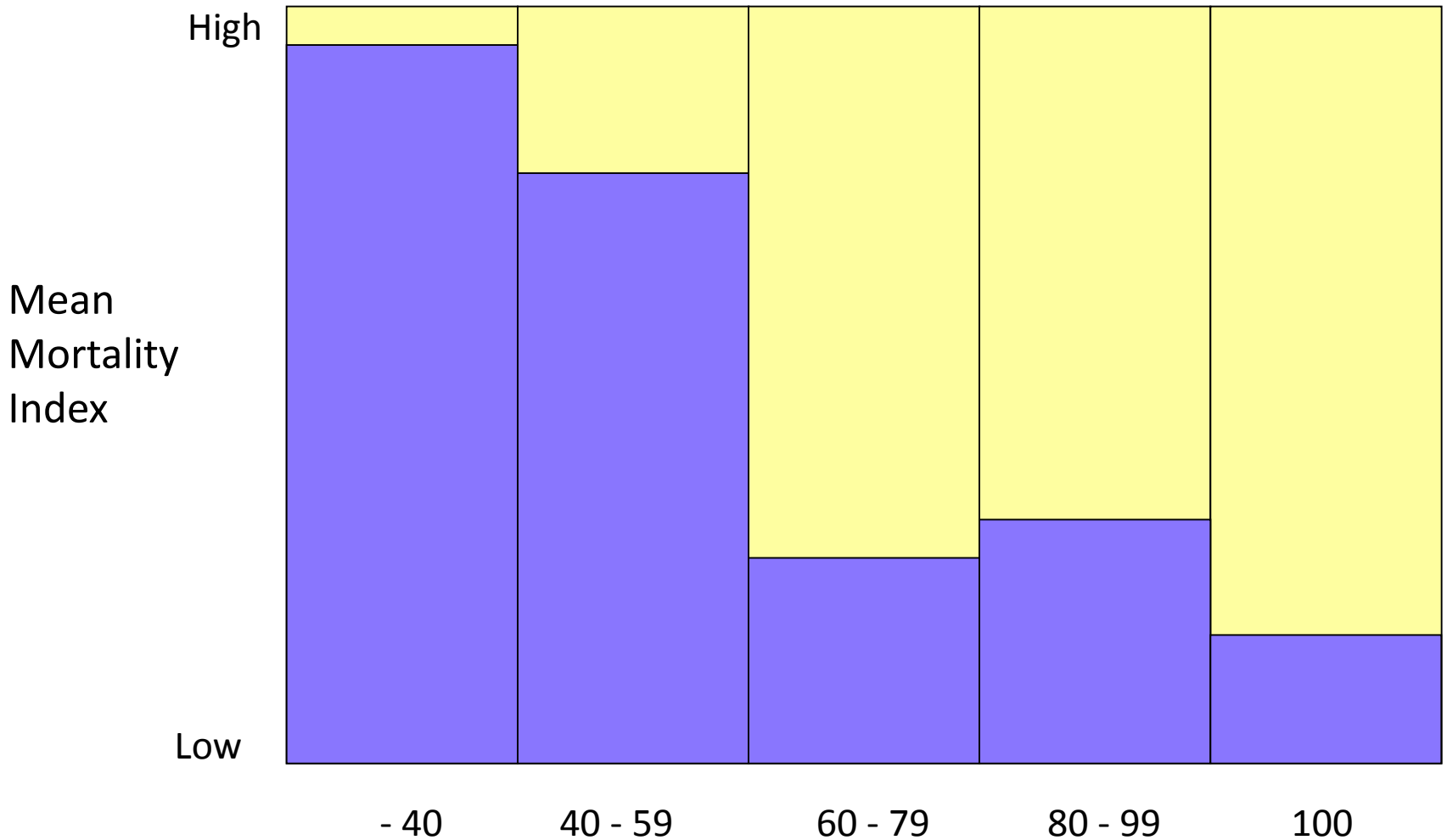
## What's the Point of Equivalence?

- > We get the best from all our people. Productivity, transparency
- > Followers are leaders' customers
- > We don't polarise, we work together finding joint solutions  
We really do work as a team.....Cogs ladder, West's research
- > There is recognition of management as a contributor profession
- > We use our leaders for leadership and people development
- > Its modern, effective, fit for the future. A new solution.
- > Brexit must be inclusive. 15 million for 14 million against

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# Michael West on Teamwork



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## The Dangers of Equivalent Praxis

- > A shift from a dependant-dominance model to an equally responsible –cooperative working model is challenging.
  - > Encouraging entrepreneurialism takes firm negotiation
  - > In organisations under scrutiny Equivalent Leadership can seem threatening and be criticised as it is ‘unusual’ and undervalued even though it derives from espoused values.
  - > Emphasis must be on accountability rather than freedom, performance management rather than creative decisions.
  - > Case Study  
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## Out At The Pub?.....or in Bed?

- > Large LA Fieldwork and Residential work staff
- > MM Practising Equivalence
- > Treated homes managers to the same freedom to make decisions
- > 5.45pm lovely summers evening, no one to be seen
- > All in bed!! Ill? No, 10 day staff off at 5.30. 2 Night staff on
- > Financial gain. Finance measured
- > Quality of life not measured. Shared values?

## Necessary Conditions for Equivalence

- > A clear vision and absolute clarity of understood objectives
- > A shared commitment to make things happen
- > A shared culture of competence
- > Staff willing and able to operate within the freedom given
- > Management as an acknowledged and valued skillset
- > Senior people listening not talking
- > Adult-adult interaction
- > Stature not Status.

## Support for Equivalent Leaders and Followers

- > A wolf in sheep's clothing
- > Cannot underestimate the difficulty, this is change management
- > High personal cost to early implementers
- > Action Learning Methodology
- > Consistency of approach eg Disciplinary Action

## To make you smile!

- > Gendered Leadership vs Integrated leadership
- > Short and tall leaders and their style
- > 100 years of change and stability
- > Mother mistress witch /wizard playboy uncle leader

## Short and Tall Leaders LA CEOs

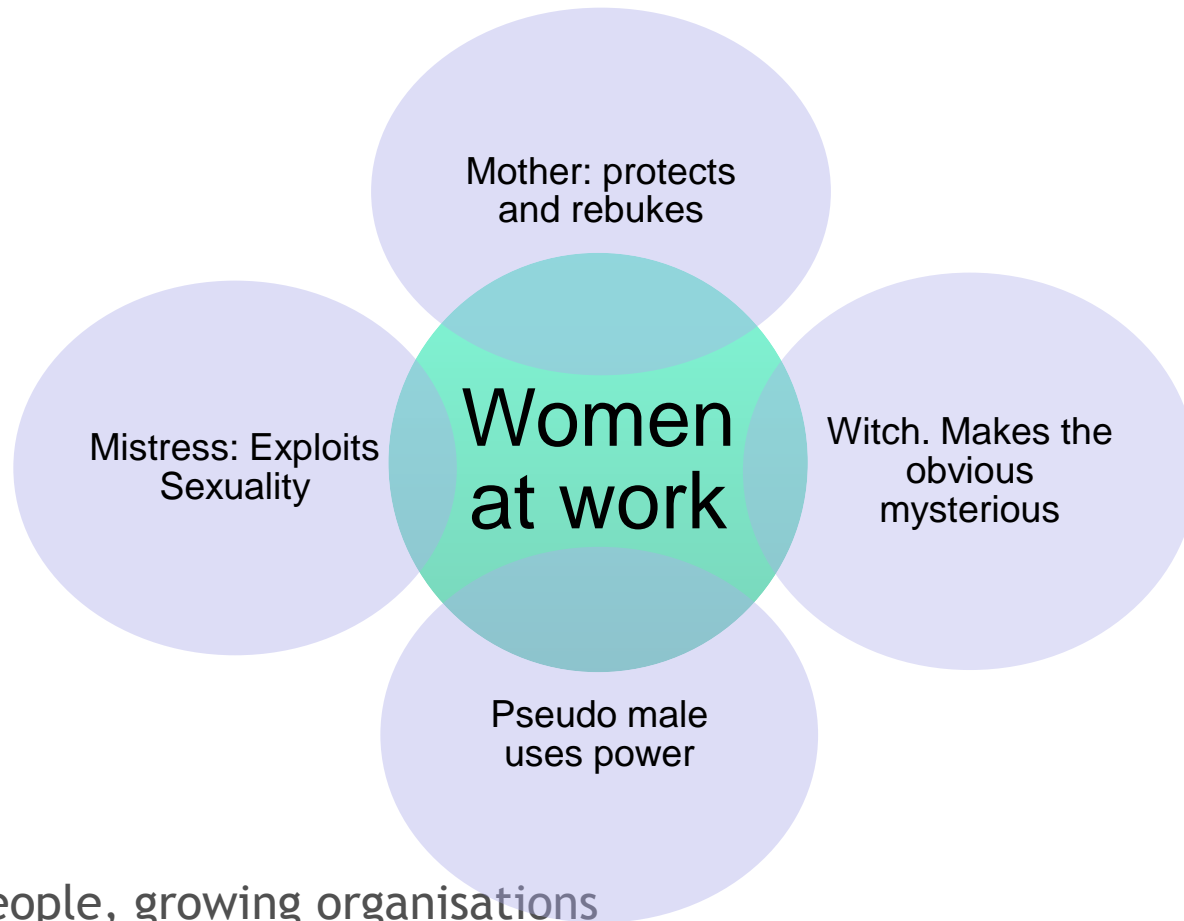
- > Majority consultative /democratic
- > Minority command and control
- > Consultative = average height
- > Majority of command and control - Tall
- > No discernable difference between men and women
- > Theory disproved!!



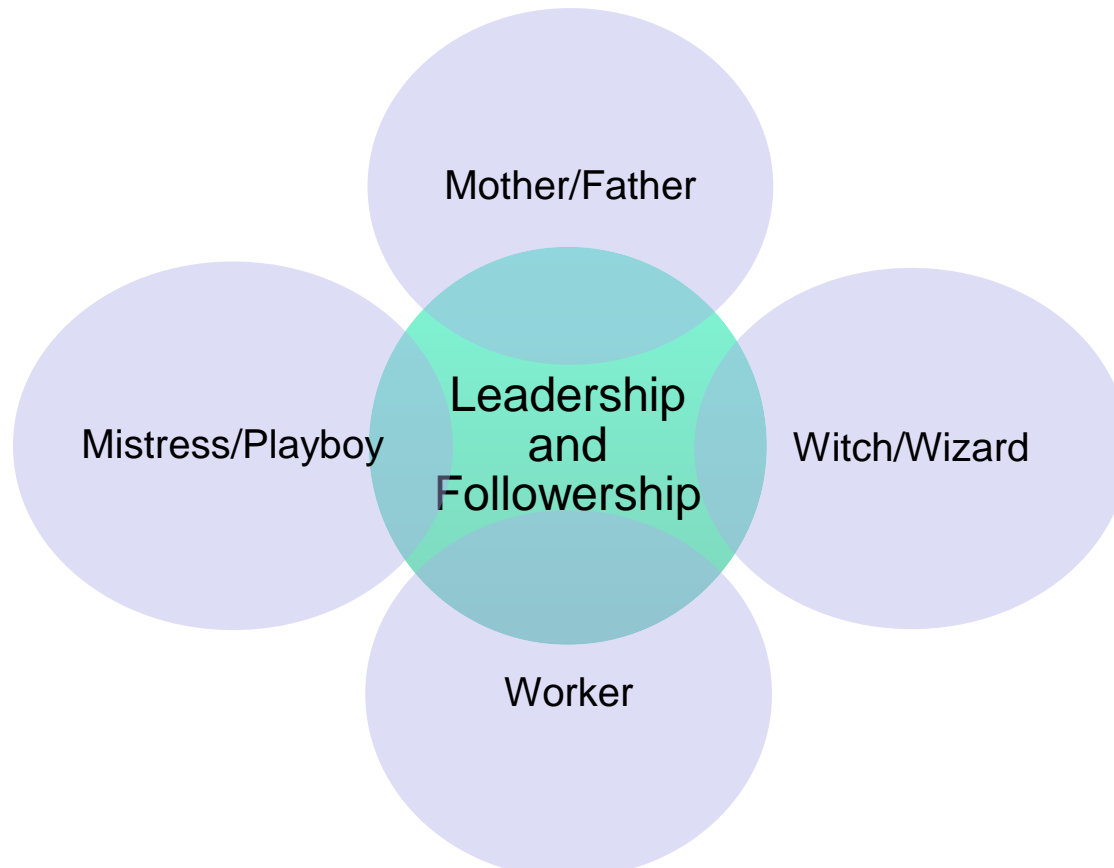
Decade	Roles	Women Leaders	Perception	Image and Style. F	Image and Style. M
1940	Secretary	Behind throne	Flirtatious	Pretty. Lipstick	Structured suit
1950	Bluestock	Brains	Asexual	Chair Mao	Suit
1960	Iron Lady	Bossy	Mother naughty Boy	Shoulder pads red lipstick	Suit
1970	Feminist	Sexuality exploited	Ante men	Doc Martin	Suit
1980	Feminist reactionary	Sexuality ignored	Power	Suits	Suit
1990	Post fem	Value difference	Role specific	Unstructured clothes	Suit
2000...on	Equality?	Grudging acceptance	No games Tired	Free style	Unstructured clothes

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# Mother Mistress Witch...no Other Role



# Mother-Mistress-Witch.....Worker?



## If we do the same.....

- > We do need and are practising different styles of leadership more suited to modern housing workforce and clientele. Authenticity and fidelity.
- > This different style needs to be recognised and studied
- > We need a name for it....£50 to a wordsmith!
- > We must hold followership development sessions
- > We must build reflective practise into the everyday
- > Action learning vs Tribunal....48% of the financial cost, retains 100% of the human and organisational cost.

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## Workshop

- > Pursues further the possibilities and pitfalls of Equivalence
- > Uses an action learning model to solve real time issues brought by participants and considers case studies
- > Looks at an effective 'at work' model for Action Learning
- > Discusses further the Action Learning approach to Grievance and Disciplinary issues.
- > To jointly and equally explore the potential benefit of an equivalent approach.

## Possibilities and Pitfalls of Equivalence

- > Questions and thoughts from the presentation
- > What value do you see?
- > What pitfalls do you see?
- > Are you already practising Equivalence?
- > How is it working?

# An Action Learning Model

Action research helps people identify

- > What they are trying to do
- > What stops them
- > What they might do about that
- > Who their power holders are
- > What assumptions they make
- > Their sense-making

A framework for reflection

- > Need have no single theoretical basis
- > Implies that debate follows the style of the presenter
- > Gives managers time out with peers to think
- > Provides opportunity to plan, talk and report on action

# An Action Learning Model

Action learners talk, think and act, and so,

- > Tackle real life problems / opportunities
- > Are the core of a learning organisation
- > Observe and criticise themselves in action
- > Tackle projects which need action, not sympathy
- > Support and encourage peers
- > Discipline themselves and apply their learning

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Vital requirements

- > Make a learning set
- > Read the literature
- > It is part of, not a threat to, organisational development
- > Seniors act to motivate learning sets
- > Seniors underwrite action learning
- > Power holders agree to action learning
- > Good organisation and administration
- > Absolute commitment from set members



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## Working agreements

- > Meet away from the workplace
- > Agree preferred working times
- > Build in sociability slots
- > Agree and stick to clear ground rules
- > Define levels of confidentiality
- > Review and develop ground rules over time

## Running a set

- > Appoint a time-keeper/note taker
- > Apportion time 2/3 : 1/3
- > Allow the presenter to state the case (practice)
- > Ask only points of information
- > Discuss the problem with/ without the presenter
- > Offer solutions / possible action
- > Try out – role play the action
- > Arrange for feedback

# An Action Learning Model

A problem solving model

- > Define the problem
- > Clarify the context
- > Use models / pictures to describe the problem
- > Specify aims – are solutions possible?
- > Identify critical factors
- > Set criteria for success
- > Generate solutions
- > Rehearse – role play
- > Take action

## Action Learning Grievance and Disciplinary

- > This is 'by agreement'
- > Involves all parties:
  - 'Perpetrator'
  - 'Victim'
  - Line managers
  - Unions
  - Facilitator

Must be formally recorded and subject to removal

## Grievance and Disciplinary Learning

- > All parties commit the time
- > All sessions must be facilitated
- > Sessions fairly close together
- > Resolution delegated to the Action learning Set
- > Recommendations to Board or Senior Management
- > Response required from Board or senior management
- > 'Perpetrator' invited to assist facilitation of next set.