

# MillerKnoll

**Hospitality in Design: More  
Than Just Food and Drink**

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# MillerKnoll

NaughtOne

Edelman

DATESWEISER



HAY

GEIGER

KnollTextiles

Knoll



HermanMiller



colebrook bosson saunders

MUUTO

maharam spinneybeck filzfelt

HOLLY HUNT

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# Hospitality

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01

# Introduction

**‘Hospitality is one of those words  
that promise something they do  
not quite deliver.’**

John Caputo

02

# The History of Hospitality

**Hospitality is a deeply embedded  
human activity.**

## Core Trait in World Religions

### Hinduism

Offering food and shelter to strangers is fundamental to beliefs and culture. The unexpected guest is especially honored.

### Judaism

Showing hospitality to guests is considered a mitzvah. When one knows of strangers who are hungry or need a place to stay, it becomes a legal obligation.

### Buddhism

Hospitality is providing food, accommodation, and help to guests, strangers, and travelers.

### Christianity

Hospitality is practicing the gospel, with meals and resources extended to all, without expectation of return.

### Islam

True believer offers hospitality to strangers to honor God. Guests are typically served food and drink as soon as they arrive, Often given the best accommodation available.

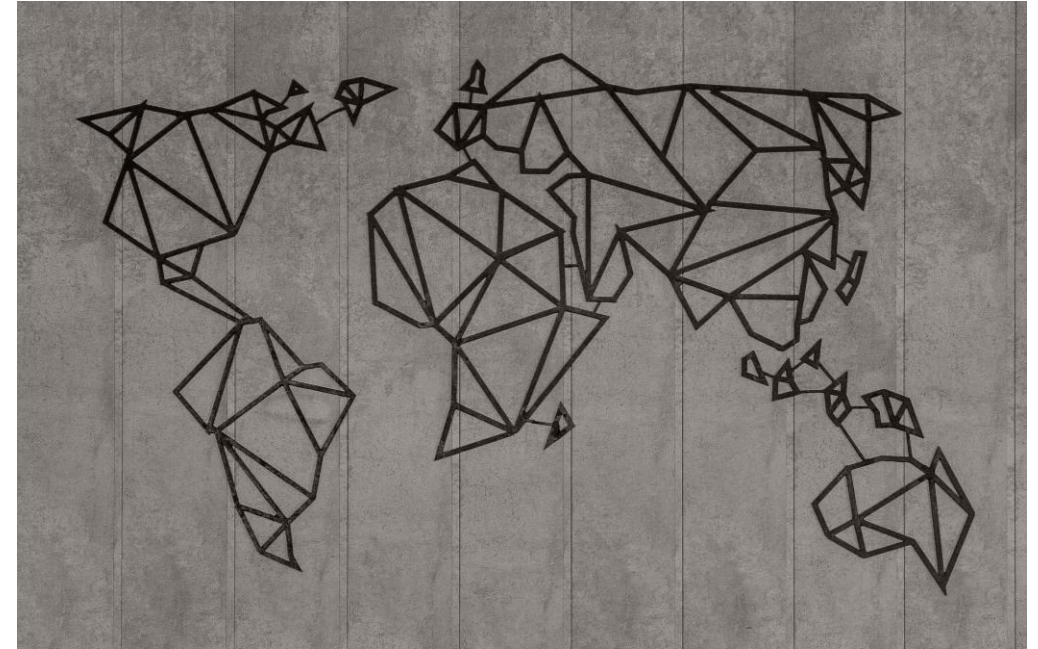
# Across Geographies

## Indigenous Peoples of Australia

Showing welcome to outsiders and treating them with respect and kindness. Providing shelter, food, and water to travelers and guests, as well as sharing stories and cultural traditions.

## Indigenous Peoples of North America

Commonly offer food, shelter, and other resources to travelers or guests. Emphasis on showing respect and kindness to their visitors. This often involved engaging in conversation and listening to their guest's stories and experiences.



# Expressed in Architecture

## **Walls, gates, doors, and configuration**

Boundaries served to enforce ritual arrival, a 'crossing' transforming the stranger to a guest. Arrival areas into the 'within or us' space tended towards the monumental to impress.


Layout reflects status or criticality in plan depth.



(Hillier & Hanson, 1984; Heal, 1990; Leed, 1991)

# Reflected in Language

## Hostis to Hospes

Hostile stranger (hostis)            Guest (hospes)

# Embedded in Literature

## Homer – The Odyssey

Says Eumaeus, ‘For it is Zeus who sends to us all beggars and strangers; and a gift, however small, means much when given by a man like me...’ (Book XIV)

## Shakespeare – King Lear

Says Gloucester, ‘What mean your graces? Good my friends, consider/You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.’ (Act 3, Scene 7)



**‘...there is no culture that is not  
also a culture of hospitality ...**

**Hospitality—this is culture itself.’**

Jacques Derrida, 2002

03

# The Meaning of Hospitality

**Hospitality is a common set of activities and behaviors.**

# Can We Agree What Hospitality Is?

## **Burgess (1982)**

... classified as private, public, or institutional, with social or economic motives.

## **Reuland (1982)**

... an exchange process, with one-way transaction involving products, employee behaviors, and the environment.

## **Cassee (1983) and Others**

... a harmonized mix of the tangible and intangible: food, beverage, bed, ambiance, environment, and staff behavior.

## **Telfer (2000)**

... a process concerning the management of strangers

## **Hepple, Kipps, & Thompson (1990)**

... from host to guest away from home, interactive, tangible and intangible, where the host provides security and psychological and physical comfort.

## **Brotherton (1999)**

... poorly defined, overlaps with similar domains. Is it a product, a process, and experience? The tendency to take a commercial, economic POV, focus on hoteliers and caterers

# Hospitality is a Relationship Between Hosts and Guests

The following critical components must happen at the same time to be considered hospitality:

- Human interaction
- Contemporaneous
- Voluntary
- Mutually beneficial
- Provision



(Brotherton, 1999)

# Hospitality is... Human Interaction

## Not simply provisional

Human interaction is a hallmark of hospitality, differentiating from other types of activity or businesses such as a grocery store, or retail.

# Hospitality is... Contemporaneous

## **With a close, temporal and spatial relationship**

Hospitality welcomes others into a shared space with shared presence. Space is inextricably linked to hospitality.

(Reeves, 2016)

# Hospitality is... Voluntary

## As Per Duty or Moral Imperative

There is a sense of generosity, of choosing to give.

# Hospitality is... Mutually Beneficial

## And tangible and/or intangible

The host is open to what the guest has to offer.

Motive can heighten or taint the exchange.

# Hospitality is... Provision & Consumption

## **Provision of protection, physical and psychological**

The host has the obligation to protect and provide security.

The guest has the obligation to do no harm to the host.

Includes food, drink, shelter, and any number of exchanges.

The host provides; the guest complies. To refuse an offer of hospitality is the height of dishonor. (Rivers, 2012)

# Hospitality is... NOT Just Hospitable Intent

## Nor a sense, nor an element

One can behave hospitably without engaging in hospitality; hospitable behavior is often paired, however, with hospitality.

‘Servicescapes’ include atmospherics, physical design, and social factors. (Bitner, 1992)

‘Healthscapes’ capture how an environment affects user responses, a hospitable atmosphere. (Hutton, 1995)

**Hospitality is about fundamental  
human needs.**

# Fundamental Human Needs

## **Security**

We desire health, safety, familiarity, and competence.

## **Status**

We seek recognition of our contributions.

## **Purpose**

We want to make a meaningful difference.

## **Achievement**

We strive for excellence and take pride in our accomplishments

## **Autonomy**

We seek freedom in our actions and decisions.

## **Belonging**

We want a meaningful connection to others.

# 04

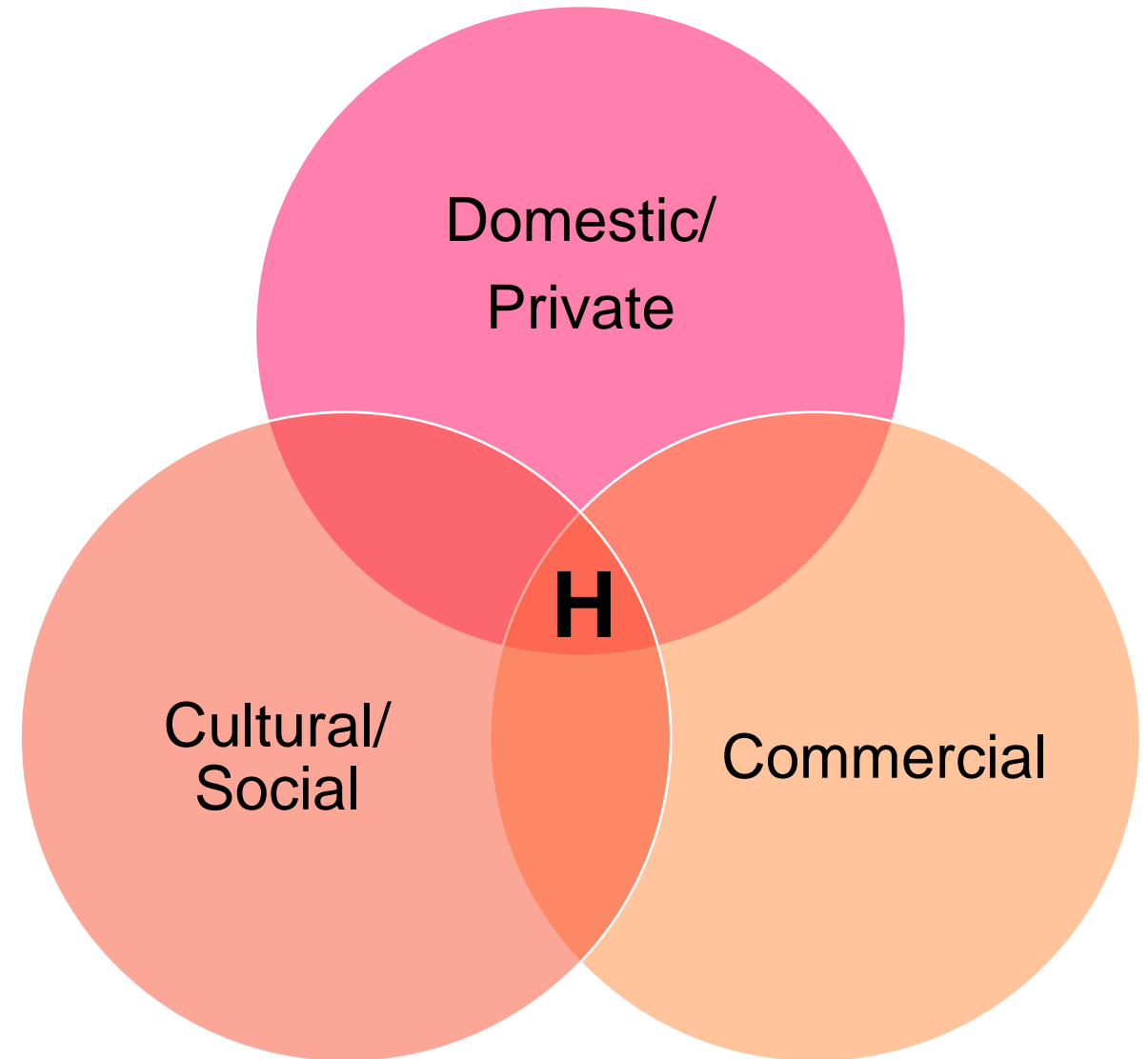
## The Domains of Hospitality

# Domains of Hospitality

Cultural/Social – Dealing with strangers (security), mutuality, status and prestige

Domestic/Private – Host/guest obligations, attending to physiological and psychological needs.

Commercial – Fundamentals provision for profit, rating, or referral.



(Lashley & Morrison, 2000)

# Motives Explain Actions

**Ulterior  
Motives  
Hospitality**

**Containing  
Hospitality**

**Commercial  
Hospitality**

**Reciprocal  
Hospitality**

**Redistributive  
Hospitality**

**Altruistic  
Hospitality**



(Lashley, 2015)

**Much like capital 'A' architecture,  
we seek capital 'H' hospitality.**

# 05

## The Host - Guest Relationship

**‘A guest cannot be a guest where he has rights and responsibilities.’**

Rivers, 2012

# Who is the Host?

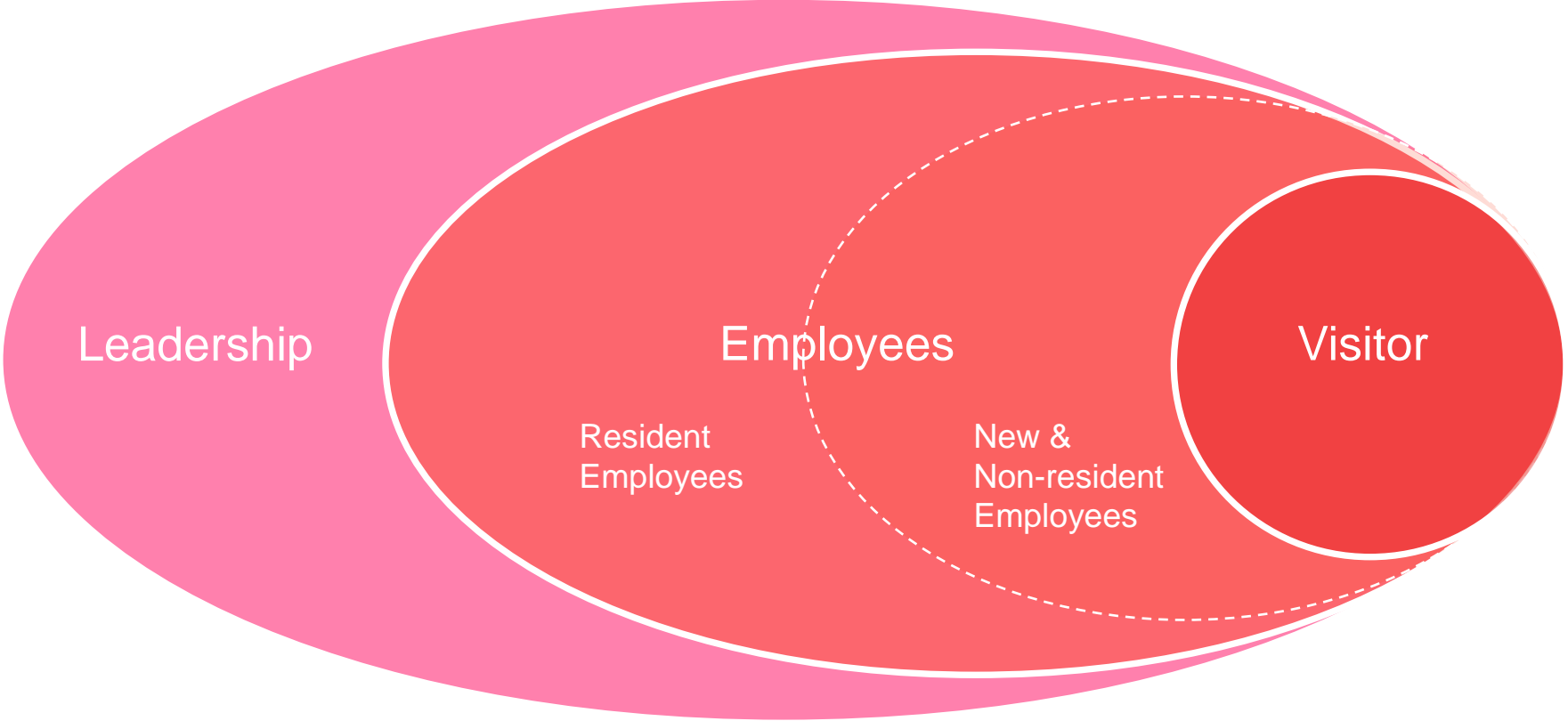


Leadership



Employees

# Nested Hosting



(Ossmann, 2023)

# When Leadership Hosts Employees

Security and safety – physical and psychological

Physical comfort

Hosting opportunities



# When Employees Host Visitors

Security and safety

Physical comfort

Belonging



**‘...the hospitable organization must extend hospitality not only to its guests, but also to its host employees...’**

Dr. Carol King, 1995

# 06

## Designing for the Practice of Hospitality

**...the practice of hospitality is  
protection, intellectual welcome,  
and table fellowship...**

Jamye R. Reeves, 2016

# Hospitality is Protection

- Design for employee and visitor physical safety and security, a culture of security
- Design for employee and visitor psychological security; trauma-informed design
- Design for respite
- Design for team or function territory, a space to 'own'

(Reeves, 2016)

# Hospitality is Intellectual Welcome

- Design for micro-territories where employees can be hosts
- Design for exchange of ideas
- Design for diverse people and families
- Design for neurodiversity

(Reeves, 2016)

# Hospitality is Table Fellowship

- Design for sharing a meal, a beverage – same table, same level
- Design for ‘sobremesa’

(Reeves, 2016)

**‘... firms by definition offer services to consumers in hostile environments, away from the safety and familiarity of their normal surroundings, where they are distant from familiar cultures, resources and languages in the place they visit.’**

Buhalis, Harwood, Bogicevic, Viglia, Beldona, Hofacker, 2019

# 07

## Open Questions & Final Thoughts

# Open Questions

- Is providing an efficient technology that meets the Guest's needs – but reduces human interaction – still Hospitality?
- Can robots/ chatbots serve the benefit and purpose of human interaction in Hospitality? Invite tech as a stranger?
- Might the guest journey be that of becoming a 'local', that is, a host?

# Thank You

