

P R E M M A N A N D

THE EXTRAORDINARY ORGANISATION

*Creating the conditions where
becoming extraordinary
is a natural outcome*

H U M A N P R E S E N C E A R C H I T E C T

Author of Becoming Extraordinary · Creator of SEVA OS®

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A companion to Becoming Extraordinary

THE EXTRAORDINARY ORGANISATION

“No wonder he rushes here every Friday afternoon, Premm. I have no idea how you got this going. The energy I feel here is completely different from before.”

Elizabeth was speaking about a Georgian country house in Buckinghamshire, where I had been working as house manager for fifteen months.

She was the principal's executive assistant and knew the estate long before I arrived. Her words stayed with me because she had recognised something I had been working to change without yet having a precise name for it.

She did not begin by describing the gardens, the polished brass or the beautifully maintained rooms. She spoke about the energy of the place.

When I arrived in April 2008, the house had every reason to be beautiful. It was a weekend home for a family who ought to have looked forward to returning.

Yet the gardens had been neglected through winter. Brass stair rods were tarnished. Cobwebs remained in corners. The rooms carried the cold, tired smell of a property that had been maintained without being fully cared for. The estate possessed considerable beauty, but something about being there felt heavy.

I began with what lay directly before me. The rooms needed attention. The gardens, driveway, avenue of trees and boundaries needed care. Good contractors had to be found and trusted. Arrangements that were not working needed to change.

There was no grand announcement, no elaborate programme and no single day when everything was transformed. It was patient work, carried out and renewed over many months.

By the time Elizabeth returned, the principal was hurrying back to the house on Friday afternoons. A place he already owned had become somewhere he genuinely wanted to be.

Her observation raised a question that has stayed with me throughout my career.

What had changed beyond the things we could see?

Of course, much of the transformation was visible. The gardens and rooms looked different. The grounds were orderly and inviting. The surroundings received a level of attention they had previously lacked.

But the sensory experience had changed too. The freshness of the air, the appearance of the grounds, the scent of well-cared-for rooms, the quiet assurance of everything being attended to.

And something else. The people caring for the estate were contributing through their attention, intentions, relationships and the pride they brought to their work.

Together, these changes created something that could be experienced without necessarily being explained. Elizabeth could feel it.

Perhaps you have experienced something similar. Think about returning home after a demanding day. You open the door. A familiar scent greets you. The lighting is gentle. Perhaps you hear someone you love moving about in another room. Before you have consciously thought about it, something within you settles.

Now imagine entering those same rooms after an argument. The furniture has not moved. The surroundings are familiar. Yet an uncomfortable silence or a particular tone of voice can make your stomach tighten.

The place is the same. **The experience of being there is different.**

Sometimes, merely hearing someone's name brings warmth and affection. Another name may create unease before we have even considered why.

Even imagining a favourite beach can affect us. The sound of waves, the salt in the air, the warmth of the sun and the sensation of sand beneath our feet can awaken a feeling of freedom or calm.

Our senses, memories and associations shape far more of our experiences than we usually recognise. And we do not all experience the same surroundings in the same way. A room that makes one person feel comfortable may leave another feeling uneasy. A lively atmosphere may energise one guest while exhausting another.

The importance lies in recognising that our experience of a place extends beyond its physical features.

At the Buckinghamshire estate, the physical surroundings were only part of what had changed. Something had also been developing through the people. Their attention, intentions, shared expectations

and everyday conduct were becoming part of the character of the place.

These were not isolated acts. They were repeated through small decisions, thoughtful improvements and consistent care. Over time, a different shared awareness began to develop.

I think of this as a form of **collective consciousness**. Not that everyone thinks or feels alike, but that people gradually develop a shared awareness of what matters, what deserves attention and what they are contributing towards.

Consistent intentions and improvements influence how people see their responsibilities, how they relate to one another and what they naturally bring into an environment.

When those human contributions meet the physical and sensory surroundings, something emerges. I call it **the field**.

The field is not another name for the human conditions within an organisation. It is what emerges from those conditions together with the physical and sensory environment.

It is the quality of being there.

A person entering may experience welcome, calm, reassurance, tension or unease. They may not know precisely why. And another person may experience the same place differently.

The field is not something we install, as we might install lighting or new furniture. It is cultivated through what we consistently bring into an environment.

At the estate, we had spent fifteen months changing those inputs. Elizabeth experienced their accumulated effect.

What we repeatedly bring into an environment shapes what people are able to experience within it.

But there is another dimension to this relationship. The field does not simply receive our contributions. It can influence what people feel able to contribute next.

Think of a workplace where colleagues habitually greet one another with respect, share information willingly and respond to difficulties without unnecessary blame. Someone entering that environment may become more willing to ask questions, offer help or exercise initiative. Their contribution, in turn, can reinforce the atmosphere they encountered.

Now imagine the opposite. A colleague is criticised for raising a concern. Others notice. The next person becomes more cautious. Information begins arriving later. Problems become harder to resolve, and the frustration that follows produces further criticism.

An atmosphere of caution can gradually reinforce itself. Neither process requires a formal decision. What is repeated begins to influence what people expect. And what people expect can influence how they behave.

This is why the field of an organisation deserves our attention. It is continually being shaped, and it can influence the very contributions that will shape it tomorrow.

If this is true of a private home, imagine its significance in a hotel, resort, wellness clinic or any organisation where people create experiences for others.

Of course, leading such businesses is exceptionally demanding. Owners and investors expect sound stewardship and financial performance. Guests arrive with individual needs and increasingly high expectations. Leaders balance budgets, staffing, reputation, service quality and unexpected problems, frequently within the same hour. Their employees may be experienced or new, seasonal or permanent, rested or exhausted.

I know how much responsibility capable leaders carry, often without the time or resources they would ideally like. These pressures are real.

Yet something can remain unexplained even in a well-managed organisation. Why does one department feel assured while another, equally well trained, feels tense? Why does a thoughtful employee show excellent judgement with one leader and become hesitant with another? Why can a guest receive everything promised and still leave feeling strangely untouched?

The familiar response is to examine what people do. Perhaps the briefing needs improving, a procedure needs rewriting, training should be refreshed or another performance measure introduced. Sometimes that is precisely what is required. Standards, systems and training are essential to dependable service.

But actions do not arise independently of the people performing them. They are influenced by the conditions in which people work. And this brings us to a more revealing question.

What determines what our people are able to bring into the environment?

Imagine a leader entering a morning briefing after an uncomfortable discussion about costs. A difficult guest issue is waiting. A vacancy

remains unfilled. Several operational problems require attention. The leader has every reason to feel concerned.

But there is something else entering the room alongside those concerns. The leader's State.

A sharp reply, a raised voice or a public rebuke may alter the atmosphere before the first operational problem has been resolved. Colleagues begin listening for danger rather than information. They choose their words carefully. Someone who has noticed a problem may decide to wait until the leader seems more approachable.

We cannot remove every pressure of service, but we can decide how much pressure we transmit to others.

When people begin managing their leader's reactions before they manage the problem, something important has been lost. Truth arrives late, if it arrives at all. The leader becomes increasingly dependent on incomplete information while believing the operation is under control.

Consider the consequences. A concern that could have been resolved early becomes more complicated. Another department is caught unprepared. A guest must wait for an explanation. The team works harder to recover something that might have been prevented. The leader experiences even greater pressure. And the conditions that contributed to the problem are reinforced.

There is another possibility. A colleague reports the problem early because experience has taught them that honesty will be met with attention rather than humiliation. The leader listens.

The mistake still matters. Accountability remains. A guest still deserves recovery. But the colleague's honesty becomes the beginning of improvement rather than the beginning of embarrassment.

The difference is not that one leader values standards and the other does not. Both may care deeply about performance. The difference lies in what their behaviour makes possible for the people around them.

Amy Edmondson's research on psychological safety helps explain the importance of an environment in which people feel able to ask questions, raise concerns and acknowledge mistakes. The purpose is not to remove responsibility. It is to make responsibility work alongside honesty.

And now a familiar word begins to take on a more demanding meaning.

Culture.

We often encounter organisational culture through statements of values, recruitment messages, leadership presentations and the atmosphere an organisation hopes to create.

But employees discover an organisation's character through the consequences of everyday decisions. They notice what happens when someone makes a mistake. Whose concerns are heard. Whose dignity is protected. Which principles remain important when following them becomes inconvenient.

Culture is not what we say we believe when everything is running well. It is what our people discover we believe when those beliefs are tested.

A leader may sincerely encourage initiative while criticising an employee for a reasonable decision that did not work out. An organisation may promise exceptional care while expecting exhausted employees to conceal their fatigue behind an immaculate smile. It may declare respect while tolerating behaviour that makes colleagues afraid to speak.

These contradictions need not be deliberate to influence the working environment. People learn from what repeatedly happens. And those experiences become part of what they bring into the next encounter.

If we want to change the field, we therefore need to examine more than the behaviours we expect employees to display. We must also examine the conditions the organisation provides.

A promise of privacy requires thoughtful communication, appropriate space and discretion. A promise of restoration requires an experience that allows people to slow down rather than feel constantly interrupted. A promise of generous hospitality needs people who have enough freedom, confidence and capability to exercise generosity with judgement.

And this does not mean every organisation should feel the same. A family resort filled with activity and laughter may express its character very differently from a wellness retreat devoted to quiet reflection. Both can be extraordinary.

What matters is whether the experience is faithful to what the organisation stands for, and whether its people understand how to express that identity.

This brings us to another question.

What must our people be capable of becoming, beyond completing their tasks correctly?

Standards establish expectations, protect safety and make service dependable. Training provides knowledge and develops skills. My own career was built upon the discipline of service. I value that discipline deeply.

But there comes a moment when a standard cannot make the decision for us. A guest may arrive needing conversation or silence. Someone appearing impatient may actually be anxious. A client may need reassurance more than another explanation. Two people can make the same request while hoping to experience something entirely different.

No fixed procedure can anticipate every human possibility. When we ask only whether a procedure has been followed, we may confirm that the task was completed without discovering whether the situation was truly understood.

Confirmation tells us that we did what was prescribed. Creation asks what this particular moment requires.

Creation, in this context, is not about elaborate surprises or unnecessary improvisation. It is the ability to recognise an

opportunity and develop an appropriate response, guided by sound judgement and the organisation's values.

Consider an employee welcoming a guest who has arrived exhausted after a difficult journey. The employee may follow the arrival procedure perfectly, delivering every explanation and completing every step. Everything is correct.

Another employee may notice the guest's exhaustion, shorten the exchange, arrange what is immediately necessary and offer the remaining information later. The standard has not been abandoned. Its purpose has been understood more deeply.

The first response confirms the process. The second adapts intelligently to the situation.

Consistency of values does not require uniformity of response.

This is where I believe a different quality of professional capability becomes important. I call it **Perceptive Intelligence**.

It is the developed ability to notice what may not be immediately obvious, understand what matters in a particular human situation and exercise sound judgement in choosing an appropriate response.

Knowledge and experience remain essential. But intelligence makes that knowledge available to the living moment. A static response reproduces what has already been decided. A dynamic response draws upon what has been learned while remaining attentive to what is changing.

The distinction is not between trained and untrained people. It is between knowledge that remains confined to prescribed actions and knowledge that becomes available for intelligent creation.

This is also why **Being and Doing** matter to me. Doing is necessary. The room must be ready. The appointment must begin on time. A promise must be kept. But the quality of what we do is influenced by the State from which we do it.

Am I simply trying to finish the next task? Am I sufficiently present to recognise the person whose experience depends upon it? What intention am I bringing into this encounter?

The same action can communicate haste, indifference or genuine consideration, depending on how it is performed and experienced. Being influences Doing. And when Being becomes more conscious, Doing can become more intelligent.

The leadership challenge therefore changes. It is no longer simply a matter of asking people to perform more effectively. It becomes a question of making their intelligence, judgement and humanity more available while they perform.

Once we recognise this possibility, another familiar response deserves examination. When organisations want to improve an experience, they frequently consider what more they can provide. Another amenity. A new ritual. An additional gesture. A further instruction.

Sometimes, an addition is genuinely valuable. But more is not necessarily better. An organisation can spend considerable effort providing something that contributes little to what the recipient actually values.

What if our first responsibility were to **align**, rather than add? Align our response with the person. With the moment. With the promise we have made. With what matters most.

The most appropriate expression of care might be a candid explanation, the removal of an unnecessary interruption or the discretion to leave someone undisturbed. We may discover that the organisation already possesses everything required. What was missing was the intelligence to recognise how best to use it.

Extraordinary service is not the accumulation of more actions. It is the intelligent alignment of action with what matters.

Yet this intelligence cannot simply be demanded from employees. We cannot repeatedly encourage initiative while making every departure from a script feel dangerous. Nor can we expect thoughtful decisions from colleagues who are constantly rushed, uncertain about the organisation's priorities or afraid to acknowledge what they do not know.

A person who must devote much of their attention to self-protection has less attention available for perception. We return, therefore, to the conditions surrounding the individual.

Over more than three decades in service, I began recognising that exceptional moments were often supported by particular human and organisational conditions, whether or not anyone had consciously designed them. And when those conditions were absent, even capable professionals struggled to express what they knew.

This understanding gradually led me to develop **SEVA OS®**. State. Environment. Values. Actions. Four dimensions through which I examine and work with the human conditions behind what people notice, how they respond and what others experience.

Every organisation already possesses all four. Every person brings a State into work. Every workplace has an Environment. Every organisation operates through Values, whether they are consciously expressed or merely revealed through habitual behaviour. And every day, Actions make those conditions visible. The question is how well they work together.

Although State is the first dimension of SEVA OS®, organisational leaders must also consider what makes a constructive State possible. For that reason, I often begin a leadership conversation with **Values**.

What do we genuinely stand for? Which commitments define our character? What will we protect when doing so is inconvenient? If we say we value dignity, what happens when an employee makes a mistake? If we promise privacy, how does that commitment influence our decisions when the operation becomes busy?

Values offer direction. But direction alone is insufficient. The **Environment** must make those values workable.

This includes the physical and sensory setting, but also workload, systems, relationships, communication, leadership behaviour and the ways colleagues depend upon one another.

A commitment to attentive care is contradicted by a process that repeatedly loses the guest's concern between departments. A promise of calm becomes difficult to fulfil when employees are required to carry urgency into every interaction. An organisation

cannot reasonably expect employees to overcome every contradiction through goodwill.

Within a supportive environment, individuals have greater opportunity to take responsibility for their **State**. Their attention. Their intentions. Their sense of identity and responsibility. The energy they bring into an encounter.

This does not mean expecting perpetual enthusiasm or perfect composure. People remain human. They become tired, distracted and concerned. The aim is to become more aware of what we carry and what we may be passing on to others.

Leaders have the same responsibility. Before entering a difficult conversation, it can be valuable to ask: *What am I about to bring into this room?*

Finally, **Actions** give the other dimensions a form people can experience. A concern travels through a handover with its meaning intact. An explanation reaches a guest before they have to ask. A colleague is corrected respectfully. An employee recognises that one guest needs warmth and conversation while another needs discretion and quiet.

The actions may differ. The values guiding them remain coherent. And these actions do not end with the immediate encounter. Repeated over time, they influence the environment and the expectations of everyone involved. The cycle continues.

Values offer direction. Environment makes it workable. State carries it into the moment. Actions make it real.

And what is repeatedly made real influences the field.

This is why SEVA OS® is not a fixed script for responding to every situation. It is an architecture for understanding and developing the conditions that make intelligent responses more possible.

An organisation becomes agile not by abandoning its identity, but by understanding it deeply enough to express it appropriately in changing circumstances. It can create because its people understand what must remain true.

Return for a moment to the Buckinghamshire estate. I did not transform its character by asking everyone to repeat a particular greeting or follow an elaborate service ritual. The grounds, rooms, routines, standards of care and human contributions needed to support the same intention.

The field Elizabeth noticed was the consequence of those inputs becoming more aligned over time. She experienced something that a list of completed maintenance tasks could never fully describe.

Now consider what happens when many people contribute to one experience. One employee may demonstrate remarkable thoughtfulness. But if the next department is unprepared, or if a colleague has learned to withhold information, that thoughtful act may remain isolated.

A coherent organisation allows care, intelligence and responsibility to travel through the operation. **It makes extraordinary contribution less dependent on the presence of one exceptional individual.**

And here we arrive at an important consequence of everything we have explored. Who benefits when these conditions begin working together?

Return to the earlier example of an employee noticing a problem. This time, the colleague reports it immediately, confident that raising a concern will be understood as an act of responsibility. The leader listens.

Because the information arrives early, there is still time to act. Another department can prepare rather than react. The guest receives an explanation before uncertainty becomes frustration. The organisation may avoid the additional work involved in recovering a situation that need not have escalated.

Now consider what each person experiences.

The guest feels reassured. They do not have to chase the organisation for information. They experience the quiet confidence of being in capable hands.

The employee discovers that their observation mattered. Their judgement and honesty were valued. They have contributed to a better outcome rather than simply completed another task.

Their colleagues find cooperation easier because the information they need reaches them in time.

The leader gains a more accurate understanding of what is happening and can make better-informed decisions.

And the organisation benefits from a potentially more dependable operation, better use of its people's capabilities and a stronger basis for earning trust.

Nobody needed to introduce another amenity. No elaborate gesture was required. The organisation had improved what its people were able to contribute.

*One improvement in the invisible conditions created
the possibility of value for everyone involved.*

This is what I mean when I speak about creating organisations in which all stakeholders have the opportunity to flourish.

The client may feel understood, valued, reassured and genuinely cared for. The employee may feel trusted, capable, respected and proud of their contribution. Colleagues may experience greater cooperation and mutual support. Leaders may gain confidence in the judgement and responsibility of their teams. And owners have the opportunity to benefit from stronger relationships, a more coherent organisation and more sustainable performance.

These benefits are neither automatic nor guaranteed. Their interests will not align perfectly in every decision. Financial discipline, fair compensation, appropriate staffing, reliable standards and responsible management remain essential. Meaningful work cannot substitute for fair treatment. Nor can a pleasant atmosphere, by itself, establish commercial success.

But the possibilities deserve serious consideration. The commercial significance lies not simply in making people happier. It lies in

making more of the organisation's existing human capability available.

Problems may become visible earlier. Decisions may improve. Departments may cooperate more effectively. Leaders may spend less time rescuing avoidable situations. And guests may experience a level of thoughtful, coherent care that gives them stronger reasons to trust and return. These are outcomes worth observing and evaluating.

The deeper point is that the interests of the organisation and the people within it need not always compete. When the conditions are thoughtfully designed, value can circulate.

A person who feels trusted may contribute more thoughtfully. That contribution may make another person's work easier. Together, they may create a better experience for a client. The organisation may earn greater confidence and loyalty. And its success can create further opportunities to invest in the people and conditions that made the experience possible.

One contribution supports another. The field becomes part of a continuing cycle of influence.

*An extraordinary organisation creates the possibility
for clients, employees, colleagues, leaders and the
business to flourish together.*

That is a more demanding ambition than guest satisfaction alone. And it cannot be achieved once and then forgotten.

The field never stands still. Employees change. New leaders arrive. Expectations develop. Business pressures rise and fall.

A practice that once expressed genuine care may gradually become an empty ritual. A standard that once supported employees may become restrictive as circumstances change. Even a healthy culture can grow so confident in its own success that it stops listening.

This is why an extraordinary organisation must remain dynamic. It preserves its character without preserving every habit. It protects its values while continually discovering better ways to express them. It remains capable of learning without losing its centre.

The work is therefore less about completing a transformation programme and more about developing an ongoing quality of leadership.

I would not begin with a grand announcement. I would begin with one moment that deserves understanding. A difficult briefing. A handover that failed. A guest whose experience was different from what we intended. A capable employee whose initiative has gradually diminished.

I would invite the people closest to that moment to help me understand what happened. What do we know? What have we assumed? What conditions influenced the responses we observed? And what could we change to make a more thoughtful response possible next time?

Then I would make one meaningful improvement and examine its effects.

That is how an intention begins becoming part of an organisation's character. Not through one declaration, but through repeated decisions.

And the most persuasive evidence does not appear during a workshop or in a presentation. It appears on an ordinary day, when the leader is elsewhere.

Does information still travel early? Can colleagues exercise judgement without unnecessary fear? Does the team recognise when a prescribed response is insufficient? Can people adapt without losing the values that guide them? Do clients experience care that makes sense from their perspective rather than only from the organisation's?

These questions tell us something important about whether the conditions we are cultivating have begun to take hold.

Elizabeth's words return to me here. She was describing a house to which someone now hurried back every Friday afternoon.

The grounds had changed. The rooms had changed. The sensory experience had changed. But what struck her most was how the place felt.

No single repair, gesture or individual could fully account for it. Consistent intentions and improvements, expressed through the surroundings and the people caring for them, had gradually cultivated a different field.

That was what she experienced. And it is what I hope leaders will recognise within their own organisations.

*The visible success of an extraordinary organisation
has invisible origins.*

The more consciously we attend to those origins, the less excellence needs to depend upon luck, constant intervention or the presence of one remarkable individual.

I wrote in *Becoming Extraordinary*:

*“If excellence depends on who is working, you depend
on luck.”*

An organisation may employ exceptional people and still fail to become extraordinary. Its greater achievement is to create the conditions in which people’s capabilities can be expressed, developed and shared more consistently.

Not by demanding extraordinary behaviour at every moment. But by cultivating an environment in which becoming extraordinary is increasingly natural.

And perhaps the most revealing question for a leader is this:

*When you are no longer in the room, what will the
field you have helped create make possible for
others?*

Executive Reflection and Application

The purpose of this reflection is to help you recognise how the field of your organisation is being shaped, and what you can begin changing.

You do not need to examine the entire business at once. Begin with one ordinary experience. Choose something that happens regularly, involves people and contributes to how your organisation feels. Then look beyond the visible activity to the conditions making that activity possible.

THE FIELD WALK

Experience your organisation as someone entering it for the first time.

Choose a moment such as a morning briefing, a guest arrival, a spa reception, a departmental handover or the period immediately after a complaint. Observe without turning the exercise into a performance inspection.

1. What enters through the senses?

Notice the light, sound, scent, temperature, order, pace, privacy and physical surroundings. What does the environment appear to invite? Does it offer reassurance, welcome, energy or calm? Might something be creating unnecessary discomfort or uncertainty? Remember that different people may experience the same surroundings differently.

2. What enters through people?

Observe how people approach one another. Listen to their tone of voice. Notice their attentiveness, willingness to help, confidence, tension and respect. What qualities are people bringing into the environment? Which contributions appear to expand the possibilities of an encounter? Which seem to restrict them?

3. What is the field making possible?

Does the environment encourage people to ask questions, report concerns, think independently and cooperate? Or do people seem more concerned with avoiding mistakes, meeting deadlines and protecting themselves from criticism? What happens when something unexpected occurs? Does the organisation become more intelligent in its response, or merely more hurried?

4. What do people actually experience?

Separate what you observed from what you inferred. Where appropriate, speak with the people involved. Ask colleagues what helps or prevents them from doing their best work. Listen to clients without suggesting what they ought to have felt. The aim is to discover whether the field you intend to create resembles the one people actually experience.

The most valuable observation may be a small contradiction between what your organisation promises and what its environment makes possible.

THE SEVA OS® LEADERSHIP CONVERSATION

Take one observation from your Field Walk. Now look beneath it. The objective is to identify what contributes to the experience and where leadership can make a meaningful difference.

Values — What are we committed to?

What should this moment have expressed about our organisation? Which values were visible through our decisions? What did we protect when doing so became inconvenient? Where did our actions contradict what we claim to believe?

Environment — What made those values possible or difficult?

Consider the working arrangements, systems, information flow, relationships, workload and leadership responses. What supported intelligent action? What restricted it? Was the employee expected to compensate for a problem created by the organisation? What could leadership change?

State — What did we bring into the moment?

What attention, intention and energy were available to the people involved? Were they sufficiently present to recognise what mattered? What pressures were influencing their responses? As a leader, what did I bring into the environment? What might I have transmitted without intending to?

Actions — What did others actually experience?

What happened? Did the response meet the human situation or merely confirm that a procedure had been completed? Was something added without sufficient purpose? Could a simpler, better-aligned response have created more value? What would thoughtful action look like next time?

For each important answer, distinguish between:

Know. Believe. Not yet discovered.

This is not a scorecard for judging personalities. It is a way to separate observation from assumption and examine the conditions that leadership can influence.

Then identify two things:

One organisational condition that needs attention.

One observable behaviour that would indicate improvement.

For example, if concerns regularly arrive late, examine how earlier concerns were received. The organisational condition may be a pattern of defensive leadership responses. The observable improvement may be colleagues raising difficulties earlier, while there is still time to act.

This gives the reflection a practical direction.

A FOURTEEN-DAY EXPERIMENT

An extraordinary organisation is not developed through insight alone. Its character changes when understanding influences repeated behaviour.

For the next fourteen days, examine one condition that may be limiting the intelligence, confidence or contribution of your people.

1. Choose one recurring moment

Select an encounter in which there may be a difference between the experience you intend to create and the experience people actually have. It might involve delayed information, a rushed arrival, an incomplete handover, a difficult team briefing or hesitation to exercise initiative.

2. Establish what normally happens

Review a few recent examples before changing anything. Speak with the people involved. Understand what is already working and what makes the situation difficult. Look at the human and sensory inputs, not only the completed tasks. Identify what you can reasonably observe or compare.

3. Change one meaningful condition

Choose an improvement that makes thoughtful action easier. Perhaps leaders begin inviting difficult news earlier and responding without humiliation. Perhaps information about unresolved guest concerns travels through every handover. Perhaps an arrival procedure allows employees to exercise greater judgement according to the guest's circumstances.

Make the purpose clear. Preserve essential standards of safety, quality and fairness.

4. Practise and observe

Leaders must model the change themselves. Notice whether people are beginning to respond differently. Are concerns being raised earlier? Is information travelling more reliably? Are employees showing greater confidence in their judgement? Are clients experiencing less effort or uncertainty? Remain attentive to unintended consequences.

5. Review the results

At the end of fourteen days, bring the people involved together. Compare similar moments. Examine what changed for the client, employee, colleagues and organisation. Distinguish observations from assumptions. Decide what should be retained, refined or stopped.

A fortnight cannot establish that an organisational culture has transformed. Nor can it prove a long-term commercial return. But it can reveal whether changing one carefully chosen condition is beginning to influence what people notice, how they act and what others experience. And that is a meaningful place to begin.

We cannot directly prescribe every extraordinary experience. But we can become more deliberate about the conditions that make such experiences possible.

Notes and Sources

The Buckinghamshire estate experience and Elizabeth's observation are drawn from Premm Anand, *Becoming Extraordinary* (2026), Chapter Four, "The Invisible Human Condition."

The discussion of the field, Perceptive Intelligence, SEVA OS® and the relationship between Being and Doing reflects the author's experiences and the ideas developed in *Becoming Extraordinary*.

The leadership and service scenarios used to illustrate organisational conditions are hypothetical examples rather than reports of specific incidents.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Demerouti, E., Bakker, A. B., Nachreiner, F., and Schaufeli, W. B. (2001). "The Job Demands–Resources Model of Burnout." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 499–512.

Edmondson, A. (1999). "Psychological Safety and Learning Behavior in Work Teams." *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), 350–383.

Schneider, B., White, S. S., and Paul, M. C. (1998). "Linking Service Climate and Customer Perceptions of Service Quality: Test of a Causal Model." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83(2), 150–163.

These studies provide supporting perspectives on workplace conditions, learning and service climate. They are not presented as empirical validation of SEVA OS®.

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Over more than three decades, I have had the privilege of serving people in some of the world's most demanding hospitality and private-service environments, including royalty, heads of state and discerning families.

Those experiences shaped my conviction that extraordinary service begins long before the visible act of service itself.

Today, as a Human Presence Architect, I help service-led organisations create the culture and capability through which people can flourish, and extraordinary experiences become a more natural outcome.

If this book has brought a moment, a question or an unexplored possibility within your own organisation to mind, I would welcome the conversation.

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To explore these ideas in depth, read *Becoming Extraordinary*.
Hardcover from Amazon.de · Kindle edition from Amazon.co.uk