

A close-up photograph of several green hosta leaves, showing their characteristic ribbed texture and overlapping arrangement. The leaves are in various shades of green, from bright lime to a deeper forest green, and are slightly out of focus, creating a soft, natural background.

About Hostmanship

– the art of making people
feel welcome



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About Hostmanship

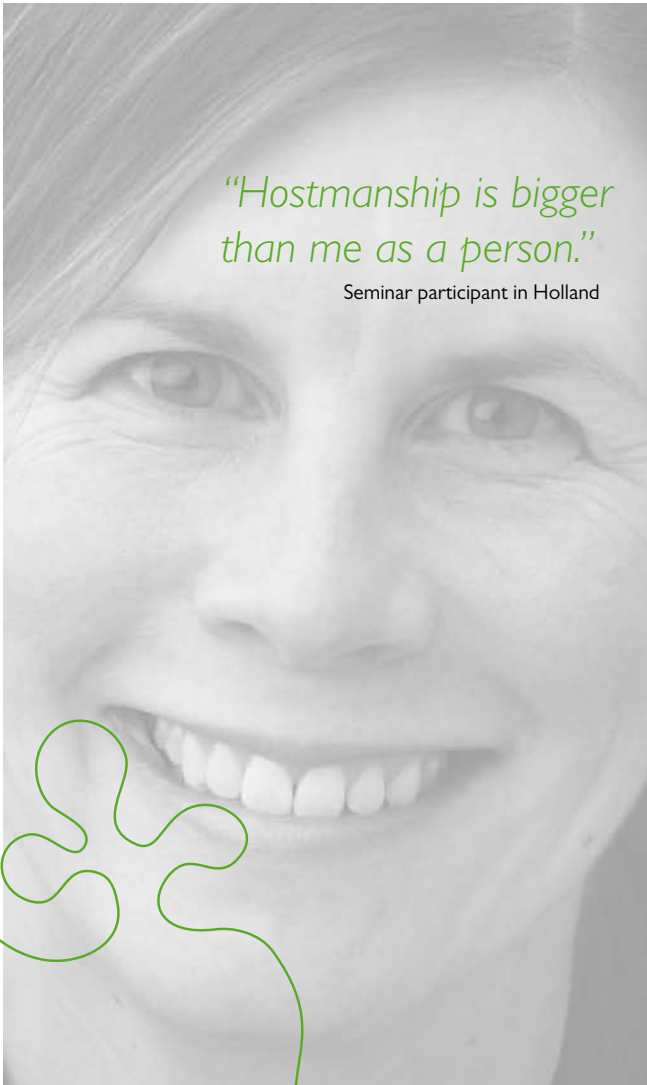
Imagine a world where people feel welcome and expected. A world where children, friends, strangers, guests, customers and colleagues dare to and want to meet each other for real.

It is our belief that this is the basis for true and lasting success for us as people, for our businesses and for the places we live.



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*“Hostmanship is bigger
than me as a person.”*

Seminar participant in Holland

Hostmanship

– a practical philosophy

Hostmanship is more than just a term, but don't confuse it with an ideology or a religion. It is free from politics, theories and dogmas. Hostmanship is more of a practical philosophy. *Practical* because it is based upon experience of what works in practice in encounters between people. Because, quite simply, it is based on reality. The fact that Hostmanship can be explained through various theories is another matter. *Philosophy* because it consists of a number of elements that make up a whole, which is itself the definition of the word philosophy. Within Hostmanship lies an invitation for people that wish to create meaningful meetings, with themselves and with others, in their private life and in their working life. At the end of the day, Hostmanship is about wanting a welcoming world, where everyone feels expected and welcome, regardless of where or how they live in the world, be it today, tomorrow or even years from now.

Hostmanship – interpretation

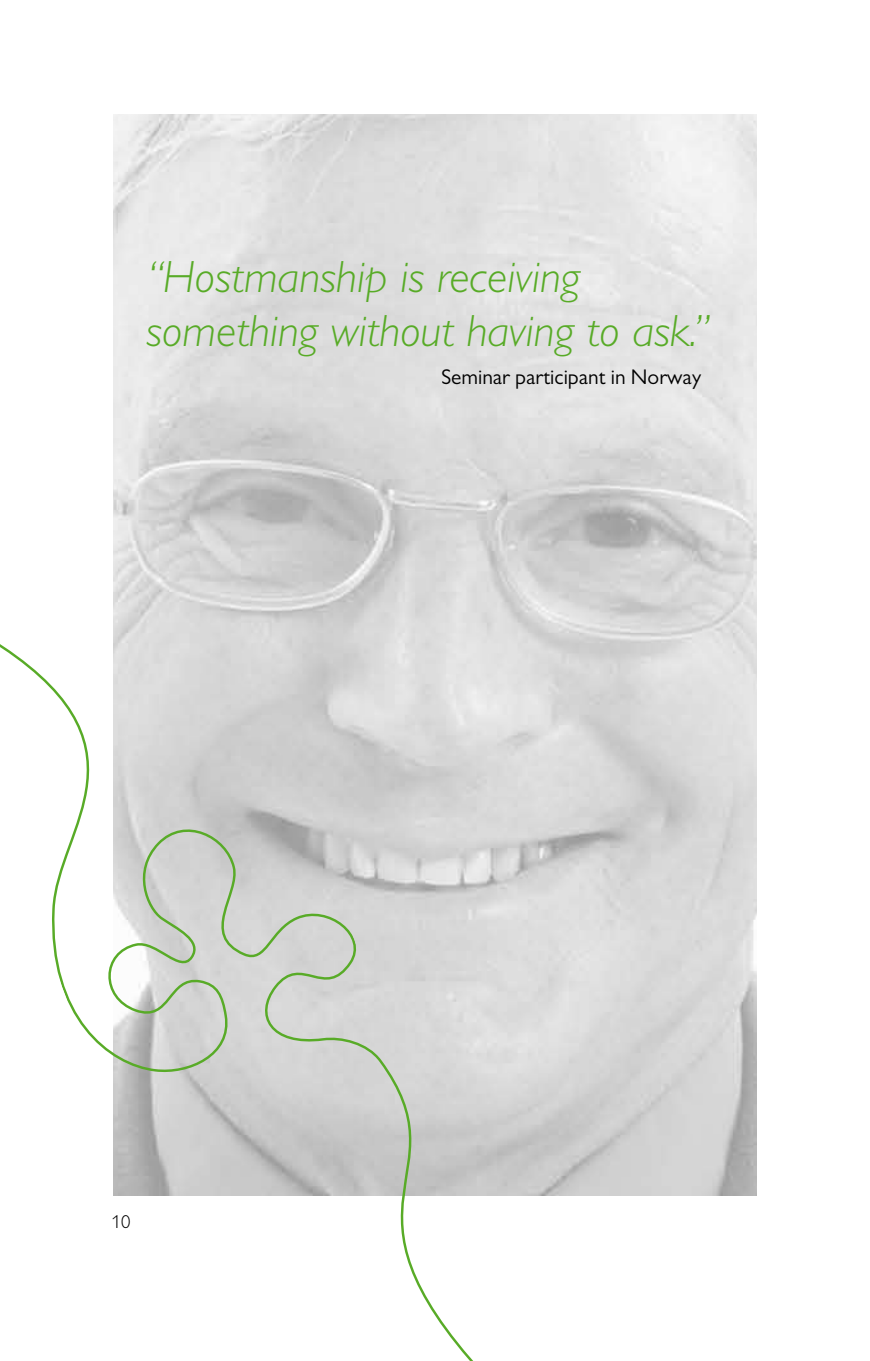
A simple interpretation of the word Hostmanship is: The art of making people feel welcome – an interpretation that contains a number of pointers for creating valuable meetings. Hostmanship is an *art*. Some of us have perhaps been given a head start, from our parents or our upbringing. But most people need to be constantly reminded of their own and others' behaviour and, like artists, they need to draw on their creativity, curiosity and inquisitiveness to be able to welcome others. It is one thing drawing on your own Hostmanship to be a good host in your own life. It is quite another to be a good host in cooperation with other people, on a broader level. Good Hostmanship is almost always a collective issue, it is about several people's attitudes and behaviours. Hostmanship is to *achieve*, which means being proactive and seeing an opportunity to influence. It is not a passive attitude, where we just react when something happens. Rather, Hostmanship is an active desire to welcome people, by being prepared and solving problems before they arise.



“I can use hostmanship in my daily life – every day.”

Seminar participant in Denmark

Hostmanship is about *people*. On the surface we are all different, but underneath our similarities are greater than our differences. Hostmanship is seeing and understanding this, and never forgetting that it is above all a human being we are meeting. A being who, just like yourself, yearns, worries, loves, fails and succeeds, regardless of where on earth he or she lives. Hostmanship is making people to feel welcome. Hostmanship is felt throughout the entire body. It is the experience of feeling commitment, feeling that someone cares, that they are happy about my presence, and that I as a guest am both important and valuable. Hostmanship is to welcome, which can be expressed in a number of ways. A warm welcome, a true welcome and a heartfelt welcome all mean that we really want to open up and let you in. Within the Hostmanship philosophy, *‘being welcome’* is the same as being expected and wanted.



“Hostmanship is receiving something without having to ask.”

Seminar participant in Norway

Hostmanship – partners

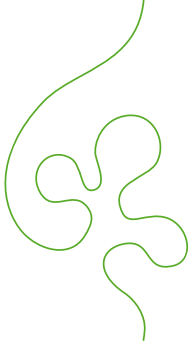
In the world of Hostmanship, everyone is a guest. Regardless of whether it says customer, client, patient, student, colleague or visitor on your badge, you can also see that person as a guest of your business. And as you begin to do so, you become a host and as soon as you do opportunities open up for you to practise the wonderful art of hosting. A good host creates value and encourages people.

- The guest experiences better quality, greater value and more success.
- The host experiences more joy, happiness and meaning in their work and in their life as a whole.
- The business develops, with more committed employees and more satisfied customers as a result.
- Cooperation partners, suppliers and other interested parties are more successful.
- Society is improved by good Hostmanship, as it contributes to a better quality of life and a warmer and more humane atmosphere.

Hostmanship – meetings

Valuable meetings are the starting point for Hostmanship. It is possible to achieve meetings that affect, create value and even perhaps change the people that meet. Good meetings are rarely a coincidence; rather they are often the result of an insight into the nature of the meeting and a conscious effort.

The starting point is *desire and curiosity* to really want to meet the other person – courage to open up in meetings where we aren't always sure of the direction in which things are going. *Inviting* people by making contact and being aware of the importance of the *first impression* we give and receive. Once the meeting with the other person has begun, it is the *presence*, the 'here and now', that is of significance. A successful meeting depends upon a mutual *confidence* which leads to *trust*. Confidence is created through *commitment*, *competence* and *clarity*. It creates an important chapter for a person and for a business, *the confidence chapter*. *The power balance* is important, the fact that the people meeting feel equal and that no one is trying to get above or below the other. Just



“Hostmanship is about getting people to feel valuable.”

Seminar participant in Sweden

as important is the *environment* in which we meet. A good environment is in turn determined by the purpose of the meeting. Whether it is about someone needing comfort, a meeting to show appreciation, a creative meeting or an educational meeting, they all require their own special environment and form. The time factor is also of significance. Sometimes a lot of time is required in order for the meeting to be a good one, but sometimes a long meeting can have an adverse affect and create stress and impatience. Equipped with an *open mind*, we can achieve more than when we have preconceived notions and prejudices. How we *end* a meeting is important too. The expectations we carry, what the next step is and what we are in agreement over, are all things that contribute to a welcoming meeting. Part of Hostmanship is *reflecting* upon how we, as people, can contribute to meetings that have an effect and create value – for us, for the people we are meeting and for the world as a whole.

“Hostmanship is the insight that all progress begins within yourself.”

Seminar participant in Uganda

Hostmanship – stages

Hostmanship is enacted on three stages, and each stage is interconnected with the others.

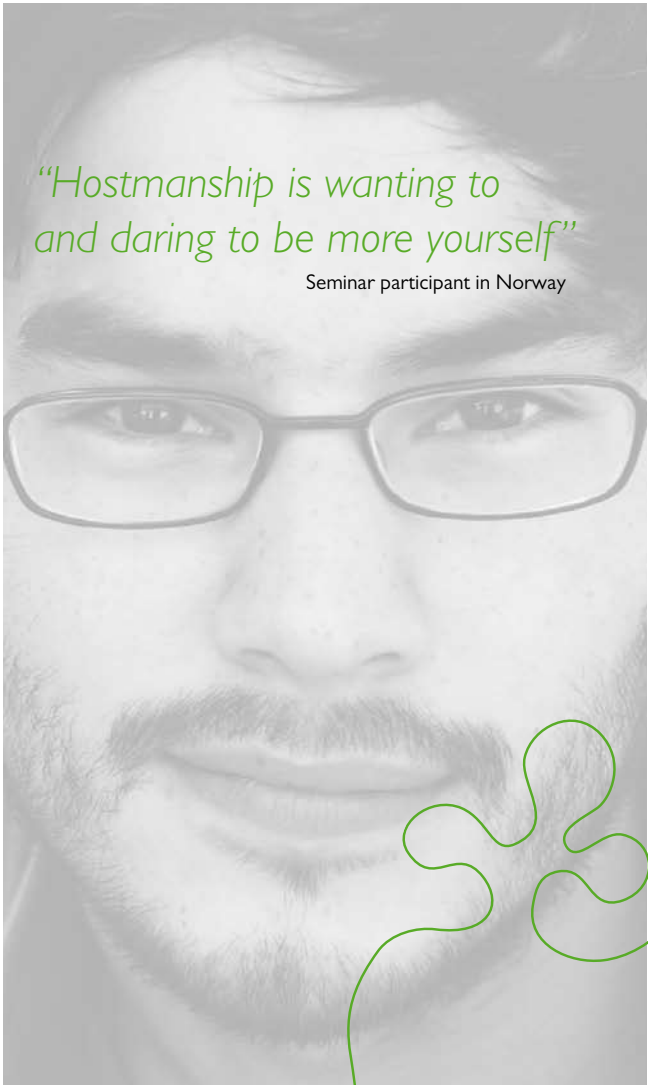
The first stage: **Welcoming others**. This is everything we think, say and do that makes the people who we don't have a close and clear relationship with, feel welcome. This could be strangers, temporary customers, visitors or people we have just briefly met. Welcoming others is not the same thing as welcoming everything people say and do. Hostmanship is saying no to things that create conflict, xenophobia, hostility and prejudice.

The second stage: **Welcoming each other**. This is when Hostmanship focuses on the people we live close to or work with. This could be family, friends or colleagues, but it could also be people that share the same living space, i.e. a town, a province or a country. If we can't welcome each other, we probably won't be able to welcome anybody else.

The third stage: **Welcoming yourself**. The true source of good Hostmanship is being able to welcome yourself. Being

able to welcome your thoughts, your insights, your self-esteem and your self-confidence. Being able to look at yourself in the mirror and see your own value, see that you have something to share. Welcoming and accepting your feelings. Listening and trusting your body's signals and daring to express them. Welcoming and respecting your body: work it, feed it and rest it; keep it in shape. These are things that clearly affect our mind and the Hostmanship we practise.

The shorter the distance between ourselves and other people, the better the Hostmanship. It is possible to see a stranger as a friend we don't yet know. It is possible to see a colleague as someone who, just like ourselves, sometimes does fantastic things, but sometimes does the opposite. It is possible to see a guest in the same way, based upon what ties us together more than what separates us. We are all part of the same humanity, with both good and slightly less good sides. With Hostmanship as the starting point, we are vastly improving the situation for a true meeting, beyond our apparent differences. Seeing and respecting each other, first and foremost because we are humans, is the ideal basis for real togetherness. How then can we not welcome people?



*“Hostmanship is wanting to
and daring to be more yourself”*

Seminar participant in Norway

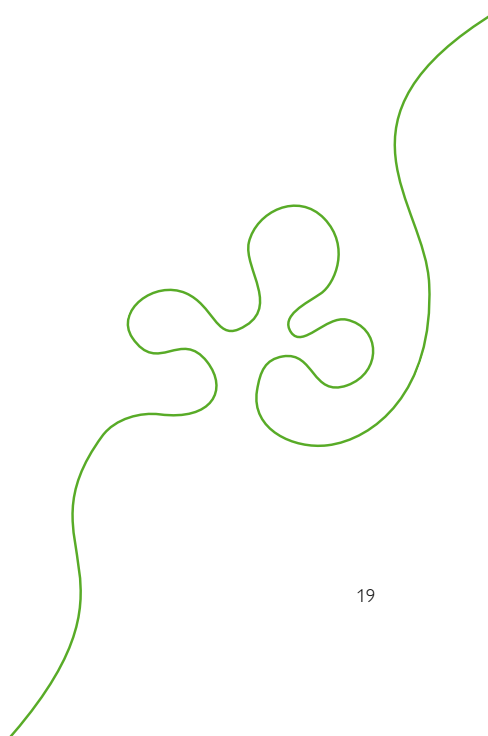
Hostmanship – challenges

We don't always succeed in showing our good Hostmanship. The reason for this is that there are sometimes challenges and obstacles that stand in our way. External obstacles could be, for example, an unwelcoming culture, stemming from unwelcoming attitudes and values. It could also be insufficient structure and planning, how things are organised or just a question of resources. Sometimes people we meet behave in ways which, for a number of reasons, we have trouble understanding. All of these things can obstruct our Hostmanship.

But there are inner obstacles too. Stress, which results in us not having the time to meet people and causes us to miss important nuances and details. Fear, which makes us clam up instead of opening up to other people. Ego, which wants to dominate and sometimes takes over. Indifference, where we don't want, or can't be bothered, to care. It is important that we identify the challenges and obstacles of Hostmanship. And understand that they are poor excuses for inadequate Hostmanship. If we focus on the basics of Hostmanship, opportunities will arise for us so that we can meet new challenges and remove obstacles.

*“Hostmanship is when service and
thoughtfulness come naturally.”*

Seminar participant in Åland



Hostmanship – the basics

Hostmanship is a state of mind. It is the attitudes and values that appear in our words and actions in our encounters and meetings with other people. You can recognise Hostmanship. Welcoming businesses and welcoming people fit into the six basic rules of Hostmanship: serving, The Big Picture, responsibility, caring, knowledge and dialogue.

Serving

Serving someone else is an expression that can be easily misconstrued. Many believe that it is the same thing as volunteering to be a doormat. Or allowing someone to be superior and putting yourself below the other person. But it is now time to recapture the expression and give it back its true meaning. Serving is being there for someone else. Using your talents and experiences, first and foremost, because you have a genuine interest in someone else's well-being: "What can I do to make you feel better at this particular moment in time?" A desire to help someone achieve their goals and thereby be successful in life. In an organisation

with good Hostmanship, there is a serving leadership. Leaders that serve their workers.

Leaders that care primarily about their workers' world and day, so that they in turn can feel free enough to serve others in their daily encounters and meetings with other people.

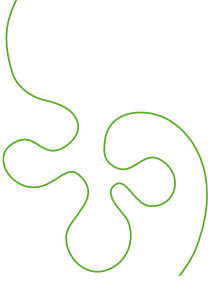
The Big Picture

The Big Picture in the world of Hostmanship is about seeing and understanding wholeness. A guest comes in from outside the business. When they meet us and our business, all they see is an entirety and everyone that works there is part of that. The person who meets the guest is always the company's outward face, right there, right then. But the wholeness we represent can also include elements of other businesses on which we depend. It could be the ease with which a guest can find a parking space, the supplier's image in the media or the province's commitments. Understanding the entirety is seeing the bigger picture in front of you, the picture that meets us, the guest who chooses to, in some

form or another, visit us. Even if we can't be responsible for everything that happens in this entirety, it is important that we understand that it is the guest's opinion of the entirety that affects their meeting with us.

Responsibility

Taking responsibility is about being courageous. It is unreasonable to feel responsible for everything that happens in the world. On the other hand, we must take responsibility for how we choose to react to what happens. We can choose to either take the event seriously or try to blame someone else. We can choose to learn something or walk away unaffected. Taking responsibility is not the same as being loyal. Loyalty is based upon sticking to the rulebook and doing as you're told. Taking responsibility is about standing on the other person's side and helping them improve the world we are both living in: a position which isn't always appreciated in 'your own ranks', but at the end of the day it creates stronger and more personal meetings.



“Hostmanship is when you don’t just think of yourself.”

Seminar participant in Sweden

Caring

Caring is the heart of Hostmanship. It is easy for a sympathetic, thoughtful person to be a good host. Taking care of other people and looking out for someone’s best interests comes naturally to such people. They strive to be thoughtful about people, resources and their own and other people’s time. The important thing is bringing out the human part of ourselves and meeting everyone as a fellow human. This may sound obvious. But you are sometimes met by environments and systems that could have been intended for everything but a human, as if the meeting was only meant to happen in theory rather than in practice. Allowing caring to prevail in a business is about seeing the human in the people that seek us out. Adapting our systems and our culture with the notion that the people we work with and the people we meet are human.

Knowledge

Having sufficient knowledge about the business and the context we are operating in is, of course important. Knowing

what we are doing and why we are doing it. But possessing knowledge is much more than this when we talk about Hostmanship. It is also about creating the space to be able to constantly learn new things that enrich our lives. It's just as much about a person's own Hostmanship, as it is Hostmanship for the business. Taking each issue seriously; and it is not always the answer that's important, rather the person asking the question. Knowledge is about opening up to all cultures and people, regardless of origin or background. Reading and understanding what the recipient understands, seeing what they see and starting there. Hostmanship is therefore very much about meeting people from their point of view and situation taking in the whole person, with interest and true commitment, and thereafter answering the questions being asked. Knowledge is far more than just knowing. It is the ability to use your knowledge in the context of another person's needs.

Dialogue

In order to be able to enter into a dialogue, you must first learn to listen, which is usually the toughest obstacle when a

problem needs resolving. We humans stick to our habits and preconceptions. We always believe that one plus one equals two, and often try to give an answer before the question has even been asked. There are three ways to meet a person when a problem arises. We can either enter into a debate and explain that the person is wrong. Or we can choose to have a discussion and convince them that we are right, or we can listen and try to understand the context by entering into a dialogue. By opening yourself up for a dialogue at every meeting, you are taking them all seriously. Seeing the unique in everyone and trying to find understanding within yourself. To be able to develop and become better, you must want to welcome even negative criticism, take it as a gift and try to understand all aspects of the problem.

*“You give service,
you are hostmanship”*

Seminar participant in Sweden



Hostmanship – leadership

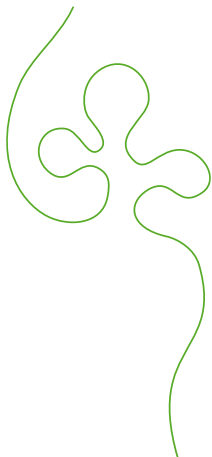
Hostmanship can be understood on a purely intellectual level. There is a clear logic and obvious connection. But you don't really understand Hostmanship until it is experienced emotionally. This is when nice thoughts are transformed into concrete actions. Leadership is a journey from one position to another. Some of the stations on this journey can be described as: Awareness – the actual starting point. Without insight or clarity of the contents, context or significance of


Hostmanship, the journey will never begin. The first step is taken through *will*, a desire to achieve Hostmanship. After which you *need, action, endurance and discipline*. Finally, Hostmanship is a question of *reflection*, constantly considering your own behaviour. All of these can be seen as personal leadership knowing where and who you are, having goals and having the ability to get there, despite the obstacles and challenges. The conditions for Hostmanship within business are created by good managers and leaders who are responsible for developing strategies, structures and systems that ensure that the business reaches its set goals. And getting people to want to

be part of that journey by applying the basics of Hostmanship in the role as manager and leader. But it's also about colleagues taking their part of the responsibility to ensure that true Hostmanship occurs.

“Hostmanship is when you forget what you have given and remember what you have received.”

Seminar participant in Denmark





*When I feel that I am worth
something – I dare to be the host.”*

Seminar participant in Sweden

Hostmanship – the rewards

Hostmanship generates success and value for all parties involved. The rewards can be summarised in words such as:

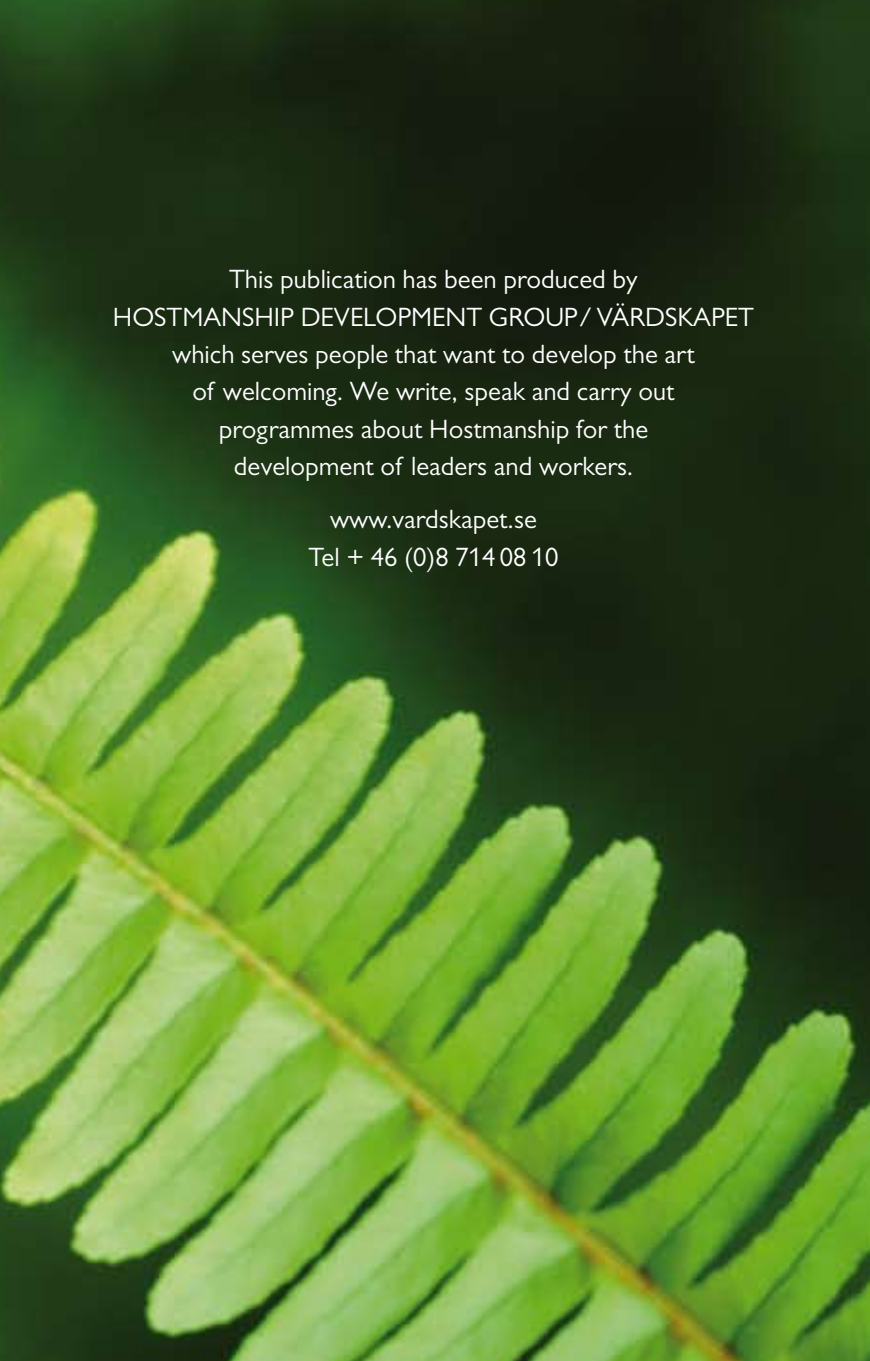
Meaning. When we do something for other people, what we do becomes meaningful.

Joy. Joy occurs when we do something with passion, with our hearts.

Success. Hostmanship is a force that contributes to creating value for us as people, for businesses and for other places.

Pride. What we feel when we do something for someone else's best interests.

Gratitude. The feeling which is invoked when we can see in someone else's eyes that what we have made a difference in their life – a reward that is hard to surpass with all the gold in the world!



This publication has been produced by
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