**"Shifting the Hollywood mindset"**

*Vlatka Hlupic and Ben Laker*

“Hollywood has the best moral compass [in the world], because it has compassion” said one prominent film producer in 2009. His name? Harvey Weinstein.

One year after “Envelopegate”, we can observe the great awakening; a "[tipping point](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tipping_point_(sociology))” that precipitated an international reckoning against sexual harassment.

Weinstein’s comment is evidence of Tinseltown’s systemic hypocrisy, a deluded industry that lauds predators like Weinstein, [Kevin Spacey](https://www.avclub.com/boston-news-anchor-accuses-kevin-spacey-of-assaulting-h-1820265678#_ga=2.105756099.1556004401.1509984116-1531855635.1492637294), and many others. By embracing a mindset of longitudinal institutional apathy, Hollywood has succumb to a case of hubris worse than Icarus.

Spacey, who’s behaviour makes Frank Underwood look like reasonable, received 20 individual allegations of inappropriate behaviour during his 11 years at The Old Vic. However, the actor’s star power, which the theatre described as a ‘cult of personality’ meant none were followed through; his stardom and status prevented people, particularly junior employees and young actors, from speaking out. Only with the emergence of the [#MeToo campaign](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Me_Too_(hashtag)), which encouraged people to share their suppressed experiences of sexual misconduct, did Spacey’s house of cards collapse – figuratively and literally.

If Hollywood really wants to be America’s moral arbiter, then it needs to start by cleaning its own house, and then engage in a mindset shift. So too does the corporate world, for Tinseltown does not have exclusivity over harassment.

A good place to start in addressing the problem of harassment is to look at the issue of power through the lens of the 5-Level Emergent Leadership model, explained in *The Management Shift*[[1]](#endnote-1) book.

Each level is characterised by specific thinking patterns, behaviour, language used, leadership style and organisational outcomes. At Level 1, a dominant mind set is “Lifeless”, culture is based on fear, and employees are isolated and disengaged. At Level 2, the individual mindset is “Reluctant”, and people do a minimum they can get away with. Leadership is uninspiring, there is a blame culture and employees feel overwhelmed. At Level 3, the mind set is “Controlled”. Leadership style is based on traditional command and control, employees are micromanaged and they do what they are told to do. At Level 4, a dominant mindset becomes “Enthusiastic”, there is a strong teamwork ethos. Integrity, passion, purpose, transparency, accountability, and caring culture are embedded in this Level. This is where highly engaged and inventive performance begins. At Level 5 mindset becomes ”Limitless” and anything seems to be possible to achieve, this is where amazing innovations are developed and big problems are solved.

It is interesting to view these five levels through perspective of power lenses, as power is an important lever not just to get things done in organisations but it can also create conditions for harassment and enacting of the "Hollywood" mindset.

There are different types of power levers that are exhibited at each of the five levels (see Table below). At Level 1 the power is based on fear. This is where people at the position of power are more likely to commit deliberate, serious (illegal) harassment. At Level 2 power is based on ignorance, both from employees and uninspiring leaders. This is the place where harassment can happen in a more oblivious way. At Level 3 the power is driven by ego of 'charismatic' lone hero leaders. They would feel entitlement to treat people inappropriately as they are "in charge", better than others. As we go through the big shift from Level 3 to Level 4 the power gets driven by a desire to be a force for common good. At Level 5 the power is driven by love for humanity and desire to make this world a better place. At Levels 4 and 5, harassment is less likely to happen. At these levels, there is a mutual respect, sense of caring and community, common purpose and mutual desire to do good.

Level 4 and 5 power leads to positive ripples, humanised organisations, improved performance and long-term profit. Power at Levels 1 to 3 produces a negative vortex of energy that leads to diminished engagement , lower performance and it creates conditions for harassment to flourish.

To go through the big shift from Level 3 to Level 4 we need inspiration or desperation. The former is preferable, the latter is, unfortunately, much more common. Hopefully, exposing unacceptable behaviour in Hollywood will continue awakening, lead to many lessons learnt and will inspire many individuals to start the journey toward shifting their mindset towards Levels 4 and 5, both in the show business and in business world.

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| **Level** | **Individual mindset** | **Power lever** | **Harassment type** |
| Level 1 | Lifeless | Fear | Deliberate |
| Level 2 | Reluctant | Ignorance | Oblivious |
| Level 3 | Controlled | Ego | Entitled |
| Level 4 | Enthusiastic | Common Good | Rare |
| Level 5 | Limitless | Humanity | Very unlikely |

Table 1. Individual mindset mapped to power levers and harassment type typical at each level

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1. Vlatka Hlupic: “The Management Shift - How to Harness the Power of People and Transform Your Organization for Sustainable Success”, Palgrave Macmillan, October 2014 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)