

THE SCHOOL OF

Possibility

*Expanding the Way We Think,
Shaping the Way We Live.*

A LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
EXPERIENCE

Classical wisdom for contemporary *leaders*

What Greek myth and Aristotle's ethics teach us
about governing ourselves before we govern others.

"Know thyself."

INSCRIBED AT THE TEMPLE OF APOLLO, DELPHI

IN PERSON · HALF A DAY · UP TO 16 PARTICIPANTS



THE FACILITATORS



- Sofia Costa Quintas
- Joana Paiva Nunes



THE PREMISE

All leadership leaves a mark. *The question is: what kind of leader do we want to be?*



Every day, leaders make decisions that affect people, teams and organisations. Some demand knowledge. Others experience. Almost all of them demand character.

We live in an age defined by speed, change and uncertainty. Yet the great challenges of leadership remain the same: to decide with discernment, to inspire trust, to mobilise people and to act responsibly.

THE CONVICTION

More than two thousand years ago, the classical tradition understood that no leadership technique can substitute for the quality of the person who leads. Before governing a city, one had first to learn to govern oneself.

WHY RETURN TO THE CLASSICS?

The classics offer no ready answers. They teach us to ask better questions. Greek myth, philosophy, epic and tragedy speak of power, responsibility, courage, ego, justice, cooperation and decision.

Understanding human nature remains one of the greatest competitive advantages any organisation can hold.

“We acquire the virtues by practising them.”

ARISTOTLE, NICOMACHEAN ETHICS



ARISTOTLE · NICOMACHEAN ETHICS

Governing begins with *character*

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle invites us to see leadership in a profoundly different way. Character is not a talent we are born with. It is formed by the choices we make, the habits we cultivate and the way we act, day after day.

We do not become leaders because we hold a position. We become leaders because we first learn to govern ourselves.

Whoever does not master their own impulses will hardly decide with justice.

Whoever does not recognise their own limits will hardly listen to others.

Aristotle calls this capacity *phronesis* — practical wisdom. It is the ability to deliberate well, to choose the best course in each circumstance.

To lead is to act with prudence when everyone else reacts on impulse. To know when to speak and when to listen.

- Deciding with discernment · not only effectiveness, but ethics
- Choices → Habits → Virtues → Character
- *Arete* (excellence) is trained — not inherited

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”

ARISTOTLE · NICOMACHEAN
ETHICS

“Nothing in excess.”

MAXIM OF DELPHI

THE THREE VIRTUES: A MEAN BETWEEN TWO EXCESSES

In the classical tradition, governing others always begins with *governing oneself*.

From this exercise of self-government three essential virtues emerge — the foundations of conscious leadership.

CURIOSITY

Contemplation.

Question before
concluding.

Listen before deciding.

Learn continuously.

COMPASSION

Sensibility.

Build relationships of
trust.

Understand without
losing discernment.

COURAGE

Action.

Take responsibility.

Face uncertainty.

Open the way for others.

LEADING IS ALSO MOBILISING PEOPLE

In the classical tradition, to govern is not merely to decide. It is to mobilise people around a shared purpose. Aristotle's *Rhetoric* shows us that influence is born of the credibility of the one who leads, the clarity of their word and the capacity to understand people.

"Persuasion is achieved by character when the speech makes the speaker worthy of trust."

ARISTOTLE, RHETORIC

Trust precedes influence. Authority is born of the coherence between character, word and action.



UMA A LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

Recovering classical wisdom to form leaders capable of governing with *discernment, humanity and courage.*

The whole experience begins with the same challenge: to know oneself in order to govern better. Before the programme, each participant completes a self-knowledge exercise — *Power of You* — the starting point for a reflection on their own style of leadership.

Throughout the experience, Greek philosophy, mythology, epic and tragedy meet the concrete challenges of contemporary organisations.

01 Self-knowledge diagnostic

The Power of You exercise — a personal starting point before the session.

02 Archetypes as mirror

Achilles, Athena, Odysseus, Antigone — what we see in them reveals us.

03 Tragedies as cases

Real situations read through the texts: which virtue is lacking, which is in excess.

04 From myth to method

Establishing the ends, deliberating the means. (Iliad and Odyssey).

“Ethics is the science of character (Ethos) — and ‘Politics’ (Polis+Ethos) is the ethics of the group.”

ARISTOTLE

A leader's true power lies in the character from which their decisions arise. No one truly governs others without first learning to govern themselves.



A HALF-DAY EXPERIENCE

Duration · 4
hours

Format · In
person

Groups · up to
16

The Facilitators



LITERATURE & PHILOSOPHY

Joana Paiva Nunes

PhD in Literary Studies from Universidade Nova de Lisboa (2011). Her thesis draws a link between Greek tragedy and audiovisual fiction, identifying Aristotle's tragic structure as the archetype of contemporary narrative. She has taught Screenwriting at NOVA FCSH.

LEADERSHIP & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Sofia Costa Quintas

Behavioural Consultant and Executive Leadership Coach with more than two decades of experience. Co-Founder of Power of You and of the School of Possibility. She designs executive learning experiences at NOVA IMS, at the intersection of human behaviour and artificial intelligence. Her programmes challenge paradigms, widen perspectives and cultivate a more conscious, authentic leadership with lasting impact.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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CLASSICAL WISDOM · CONTEMPORARY LEADERS

