

LEADERSHIP IN A CRISIS: COVID-19

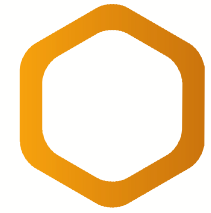
Early stages – March-June, 2020

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Institute for Sustainable Leadership

Talk delivered to Urban Land Institute of Australia, 16 July, 2020

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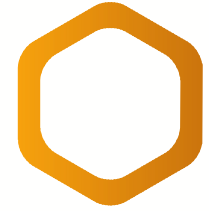
Our journey today



To see how

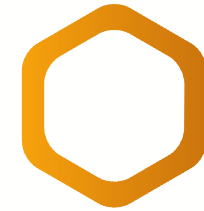
- countries adopted different leadership styles during the early stages of the 2020 COVID-19 epidemic.
- outcomes to date match predictions from research into leadership.
- these learnings apply to business and industry leadership.

Agenda



- Understanding 4 leadership paradigms
- Applying the leadership paradigms to COVID-19
- Contrasting leadership in 6 countries
- Linking leadership to COVID-19 outcomes
- Q&A

Understanding leadership paradigms



We/us

Classical



do it!
(unilateral)

Transactional



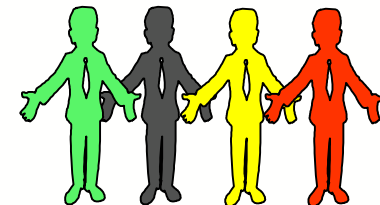
it's agreed!
(bilateral)

Visionary



your goal is ours!
(multilateral)

Organic

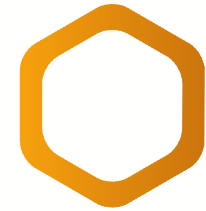


we decide!
(community)

© H. Bergsteiner, 2005

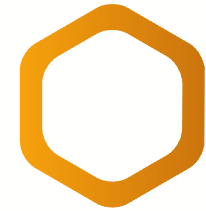
Source: Avery, *Understanding Leadership*, Sage, 2004.

Country leaders in our sample



- Donald Trump (US)
- Xi Jinping (China)
- Boris Johnson (UK)
- Jacinda Ardern (NZ)
- Angela Merkel (Germany)
- Thai military government

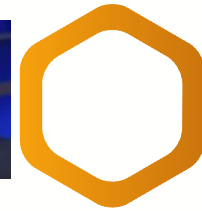
Country leadership during COVID-19



- Avoidant – Donald Trump (US)*
- Classical – Xi Jinping & CCP (China)
- Transactional – Boris Johnson (UK) *
- Visionary – Jacinda Ardern (NZ)
– Angela Merkel (Germany)
- Organic – Thai military government

* Politicians first, not scientists

Donald Trump – avoidant leadership



- Unreliable, overconfident, temperamental
- No science, no vision
- Lies about pandemic, wishing it gone
- Donald Trump: facts belie his claims
- About “me”, not “we”



Donald Trump | A medical lab for processing analysis of test samples. (Getty Images/Salon)

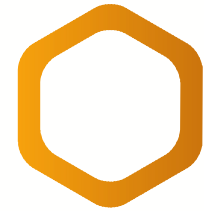
Donald Trump thinks coronavirus testing is a plot to destroy him — and no, he's not kidding

Lifelong con man has convinced himself he can make voters un-see the pandemic if he just keeps lying about it

20.8K 5.7K 6

AMANDA MARCOTTE
JUNE 23, 2020 9:55PM (UTC)

Xi Jinping, China – classical leadership

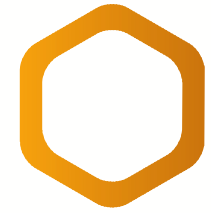


- Authoritarian tone, police enforcement
- Hierarchy and coercion culturally tolerated
- Plenty of “we”
- Watch the hospital being built in 10 days

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbNFvJhUmYE> (45 secs)



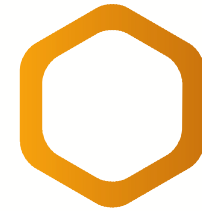
Question to consider



Could people in your country build a hospital in 10 days?

- Definitely yes
- Under certain circumstances
- Definitely No
- Can't say

Boris Johnson – transactional deal

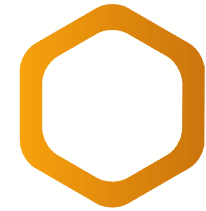


- Lockdown an "instruction" from government.
- Johnson demanded "compliance".
- Police enforcement.
- The deal: your actions will save many lives + NHS.
- Program of support offered.
- Authoritarian tone, formal, pre-recorded, no questions, focus on fear.
- From me to you, not much “we” together.

Listen to Boris speak to the British people at

<https://youtu.be/jK8vjgVlc8A> 0.00-1.30min

Jacinda Ardern (NZ) – visionary



- Ardern blended direction, care and meaning-making
- She used “we”, “us”. “Our” efforts together
- One goal: *slow down COVID-19*

Explains the science simply

It’s everyone’s job

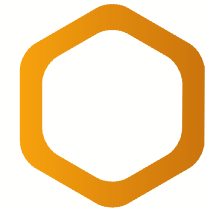
- View her formal address

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AvRuYrH5rjs&feature=youtu.be>
(0:00-2:00min)

- Then watch her informal chat from home

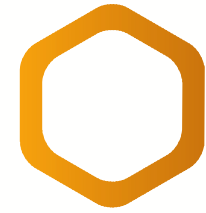
<https://youtu.be/xMA6Gz82iiQ> (2min)

Angela Merkel (Germany) – visionary



- “Mutti”. Reliable, uses facts, trusted, long-term thinker, calm, empathic.
- Listen to her talk to her people:
<https://youtu.be/NWzpSEFDYJM> (30secs)
- Angela Merkel calmly enlists her people in the task
 - Politicians and scientists out front.
 - Uses “we”.
 - Explains science simply.
 - Germans receptive to her style.

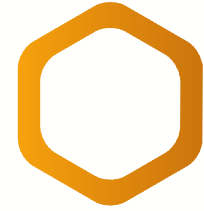
Military govt (Thailand) – organic



- Classical leadership not imposed
- Used trust built up over time with public health authorities
- Relied on “we/us/together”.
- Relied on voluntary compliance of citizens.
- 95% wearing masks.
- No hand shaking customary in Thailand.

How did they do it?

Military govt (Thailand) – organic (2)

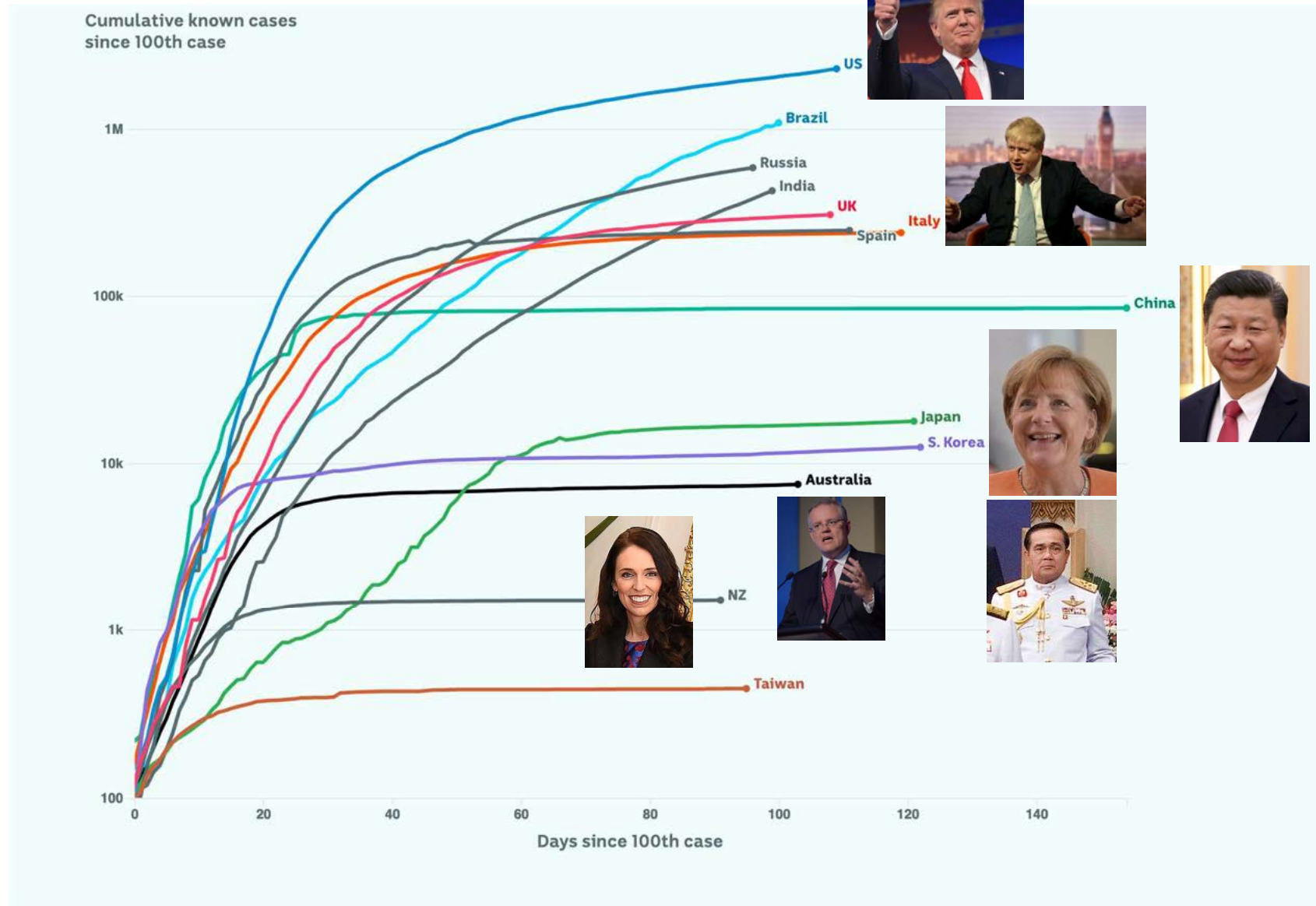
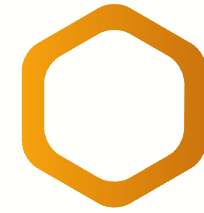


- Scientists out front, not politicians.
- Voluntary service of hundreds of thousands of grassroots public health activists.
- Used 1000 teams of Village Health Volunteers* at the community level eg home visits, collected data.
- More than 15,000 public health volunteers in Bangkok.
- Self-organising, shared leadership!

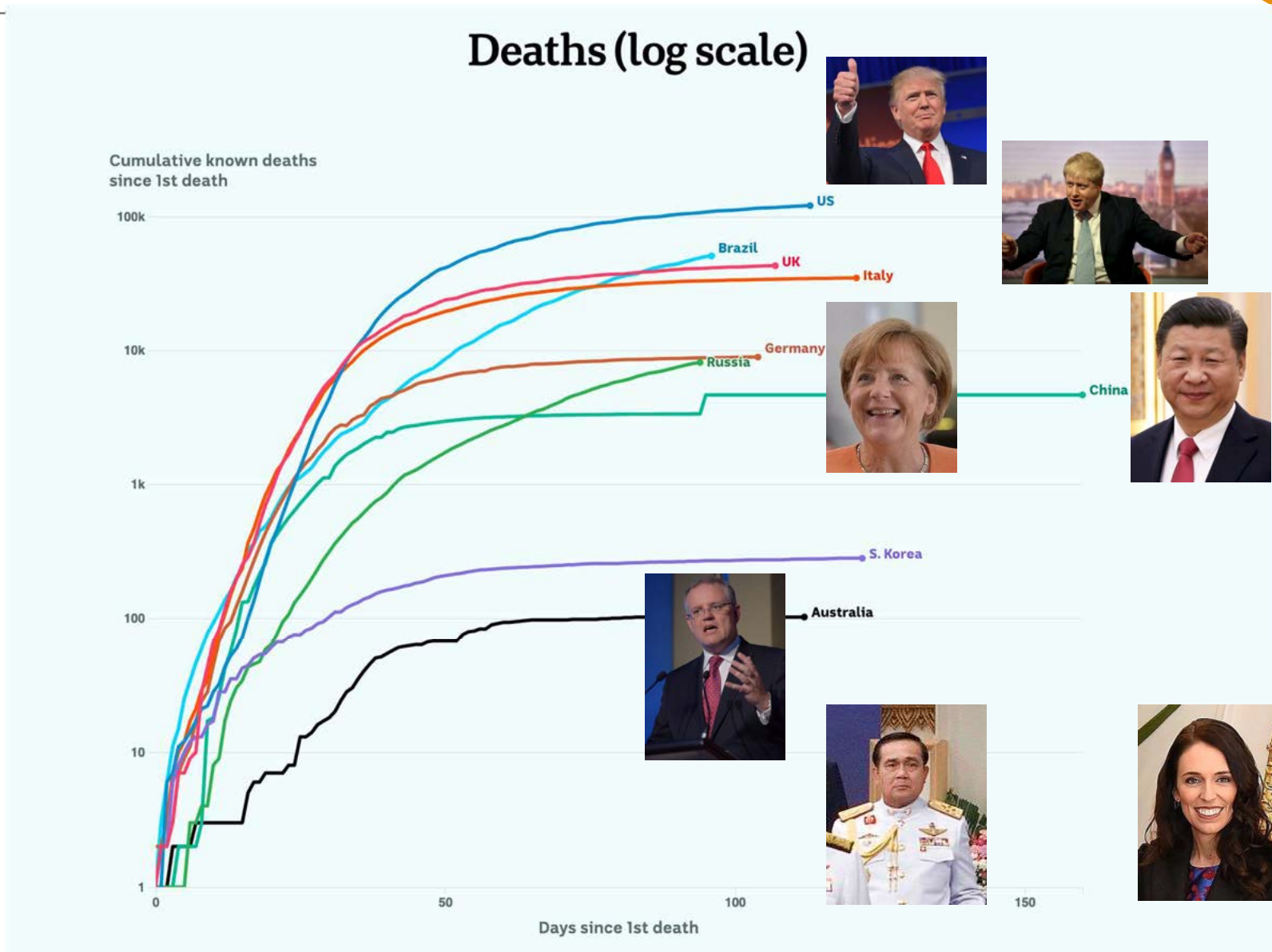
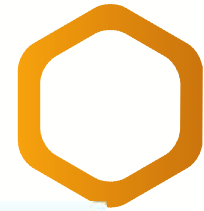
* mainly female



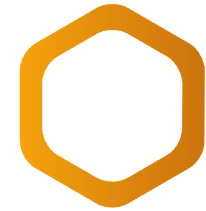
Outcomes – cases (ABC website 25/6/20)



Outcomes – deaths (ABC website 25/6/20)



Country leadership during COVID-19

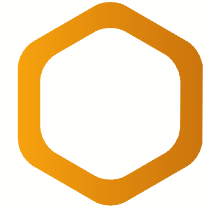


Which paradigm works depends on the followers and culture making up the system

- Avoidant – US* ✗
- Classical – China ✓
- Transactional – UK* ✗
- Visionary – NZ ✓
– Germany ✓
- Organic – Thailand ✓

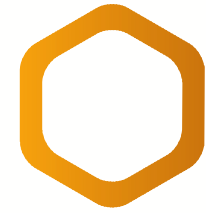
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Key learnings



- Leadership forms a system
- The “right” style depends on followers, context, processes, systems, culture - not just on the leader
- Vision-based leadership and empathy work well in the COVID crisis – just as the research predicts

Food for thought



- How would you describe leadership used during COVID-19 in your country so far?

Download our free book *Diagnosing Leadership* at

<https://instituteofsustainableleadership.com/>

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