

RETHINKING HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP

Addressing Business Challenges Amidst Global Disruption.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The April 2026 Webinar explored how hospitality leaders in Nigeria and Africa can intentionally respond to business disruptions caused by the Middle East conflict.

Speakers Belinda Nwosu and Daniel Monehin highlighted framing leadership as a matter of personal consciousness over mere technical competence, and outlined the industry-wide effects of the global crisis.

DR. BELINDA NWOSU

Navigating Market Impact & Sector Response

Belinda opened by explaining that the session was designed to move beyond simply describing the crisis and instead give leaders a practical framework for responding. She emphasised that the geopolitical tensions were affecting Africa due to interconnected global supply chains, aviation routes, and tourism flows. She cautioned against treating Africa as a single market, noting varying conditions across regions like East Africa, SADC, and ECOWAS.

“It will be a waste of time just to rehash everything that is going on without having a framework that we can walk away with.”

Dr. Nwosu argued that operators must reconsider pricing, market focus, and domestic demand as international travel weakens.

MARKET IMPACT

GCC & Africa: Passenger traffic and international travel declined.

Dubai: Hotel occupancies fell to ~22–25%, the lowest since COVID-19.

Philippines: 64% of hotels reported as severely affected.

Airfares: Rose by ~15% in some markets; intra-African travel costs surged.

India: Tourism spending dropped by almost 20% since February.

Global Impact: Over \$600M in visitor spending hit globally.

OPERATIONAL CONSEQUENCES

RISING COSTS

Operating costs spiked up to 300% in some Nigerian businesses. Energy costs are a major burden.

STAFF MOBILITY

Difficulties with staffing and late shifts. Businesses are renting nearby accommodation for staff.

SUPPLY DELAYS

Lead times for imported products extended from 45 days to 90 days.

SHIPPING RATES

Rising shipping and labour costs noted across the entire region.

SECTOR RESPONSES

UAE offered support for stranded passengers.

Gulf hotels redesigned extended-stay models with aggressive discounts.

Governments exploring debt relief and tax reviews.

Push towards greener energy (solar) as a long-term hedge.

DANIEL MONEHIN

Keynote on Intentional Leadership

Daniel distinguished between technical competence (what one knows) and leadership capability (who one is).

A major theme of his keynote was the dominance of the subconscious mind. People often lead unintentionally because subconscious patterns drive their reactions. Effective leadership requires deliberate effort to act consciously.

5%

CONSCIOUS MIND

Decisions, emotions, memory and personality

95%

SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

Internal patterns

SUBCONSCIOUS CUES IN HOSPITALITY

White bedding in hotels signals cleanliness and hygiene.

Ambient floral scents in luxury hotels increase repurchase intention.

Fast-tempo music in QSRs encourages faster eating and table turnover.

“When an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside, as fate.”
— Carl Jung (1951)

HARMFUL SUBCONSCIOUS PATTERNS

01. LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

The belief that repeated crises mean one's actions no longer influence outcomes.

Paralysis of pattern: Assuming nothing works due to prior failures.

Abdication as delegation: Mentally checking out while appearing to delegate.

Emotional drain: Losing urgency and becoming disengaged.

02. UNRESTRAINED OPTIMISM

An inflated belief in favourable outcomes that overrides reality. (The opposite distortion)

Being allergic to bad news.

Substituting confidence for strategy.

Postponing the horizon, assuming problems will resolve themselves.

Live Poll Insight: A strong mix of responses reflected how leaders often swing between these two extremes.

According to a survey by McKinsey, only 2% of the workforce is involved in transformation, often due to leaders assuming participation is futile (learned helplessness).

CONCLUSION

Navigating global disruptions requires profound, intentional leadership. As the industry faces compounding challenges, leaders must elevate their conscious decision-making, shed learned helplessness, and embrace pragmatic optimism. By anchoring leadership in personal awareness rather than purely technical skills, hospitality executives can cultivate resilience, foster innovation, and guide their teams securely through periods of profound uncertainty.

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