

NOV 2019

# ON A PERSONAL NOTE

As the first-year anniversary of Khôra wanes, I reflect on the past year with a mixture of gratitude and pride. The year was filled with challenges as all emerging enterprises are. But most unexpected was the magnitude of personal growth a journey like this affords – if you're open to the possibilities.

The first obstacle of course is being open.

Ironic; turning the lens inward given that I encourage my workshop clients to do the same deep digging to unearth what truly drives them and their organizations. We often have discussions (and exercises) that bring the focus back to the why (before this was a thing). What are the hidden cultural specificities that underlay their operational intentions and future goals? How are these leveraged and concretized to build resiliency and capacity; strengthening the connective tissue that makes a good organization great.

Turning the mirror on myself admittedly was/ is much more difficult in practice. So I'll take this time to congratulate all of those clients who, despite having a difficulty with change, forged on and trusted the process.

And there is the key word – PROCESS.

Life is, after all, a process. We are naturally hard wired to seek (pleasurable) end results quickly and often. We get disturbed when the path leads us elsewhere – to a different place than we imagined it should. But the process is where the magic happens. Its where the knowing reveals itself. The process is there to teach us what needs to be taught. The outcome can be more sincere, sustainable and beautiful.

I love design. I revere it in fact. For me it's a celebration of the creative potential all human beings possess. It's the language that speaks to us as a collective, from urban design to the clothes we wear. It solidifies communities if executed with care - if the process is engaging, thoughtful and inclusive.

This month, I'll seek to celebrate the process more; recognizing that the present moment is really all we have. And it is truly extraordinary when we fully live in it. And if the process is sound, thoughtful and intended for a purpose bigger than oneself – the outcome will no doubt be beautiful and harmonious.

A dear client asked me a year ago "What does Khôra mean...?". I explain its Greek origin, touted Plato's interpretation, and the relationship of the Chorus in a Greek play; the intended purpose of creating cathartic effect – all of which is so. But he smiled a patient smile, waited for me to wrap up, then said... "and what does Khôra mean to you? It took me a year to sincerely answer this question. I am genuinely passionate about helping companies and organizations unearth their authentic culture and only then create a space for it to thrive....

... And so, simply put, Khôra creates places for being.



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized, flowing letters.

# Integrated Project Delivery Model

## Lessons from the Sidelines

As part of Khôra's DNA we seek to deliver projects in a way that is collaborative and of benefit, first and foremost, to the stakeholders and their end users. This led me to revisit the principles of the Integrated Project Delivery (IPD) model and how they can be applied outside a formal IPD contract.

The Integrated Project Delivery model is defined as: *a collaborative alliance of people, systems, business structures and practices into a process that harnesses the talents and insights of all participants to optimize project results, increase value to the owner, reduce waste, and maximize efficiency through all phases of design, fabrication, and construction*<sup>1</sup>.

So let's look at a few of its major tenets:

### **A/** *Single multi-party contract.*

The intended purpose is to lock all major parties into the success (or failure) of the project's outcome. At the crux of this contract type is the belief that a contract can solve a fundamental issue – trust that the people involved in the project are invested.

An alternative? build and nurture a lasting relationship with all parties involved. Our emotions play a much larger role in how and with whom we choose to work. Studies show that when we feel invested, as part of a team, we naturally "root" for a successful outcome (no contracted needed).

### **B/** *Early involvement of major project parties.*

No more time needs to be spent belaboring this point. Most, if not all of us have experienced the power of all parties at the table early and the sense of ownership and teamwork it bolsters. An added benefit? The ability to see the project from all angles in the early stages avoiding major changes through the design process. A definite plus.

### **C/** *Joint management and collaborative decision making to achieve goals.*

Without complex proprietary programs and exhaustive spreadsheets, decisions can be made early and collectively; measured against the value proposition of the client and stakeholder team. Our Basis of Design Brief is a key component to our services. It has proven to be critical to the success of a project from the outset. It has the added benefit of engaging stakeholders in the process and accountability throughout the project's entirety.

### **D/** *Final profit is pooled and based on project, not individual outcome.*

This is perhaps what people most identify with the IPD. I propose that we are all called to reexamine how our design and construction practices can better serve our clients, communities and the environment in a meaningful and sustainable way. For the long haul. All over the globe we see simple examples of the shift from what was traditionally the single indicator of success to something more expansive. Joy, fulfillment, wellbeing, human connection and yes, profit are rapidly becoming the suite of commonplace indicators, as more research becomes available to support their benefits.

By employing these principles, even large organizations can reap its benefits without multilayered systems and contracts. We can actually put into practice our best talents and insights, instinctively without being beholden to systems that focus only on efficiency for the sole purpose of increasing profit. If we first identify what we value and bring that to the table / make that our standard for success, the project is naturally inclined to be successful at its highest level.

As facilitators of placemaking, we embrace the shift towards working, playing and learning at our highest human potential.

References:

<sup>1</sup><https://www.osler.com/en/resources/transactions/2018/integrated-project-delivery-model-in-canada-what-you-need-to-know>