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Bye-Bye Managers?

The world is changing - the business is changing - people are changing - digitalization deprives managers from predominant knowledge - processes are so specialized that peers won't add value to it or wouldn't even be able to control and check the outcome - and last, not least "intimidation" isn't working any more. All this changes management and makes us managers wonder about our role inside our organizations. How do we really earn the money the company pays us? We remember times when Change was driven Top-Down. Now, Change happens and many are just happy to understand, what is going on and catch up with all these changes. This leads to one assumption: Managers aren't needed any more!

But of course: Assessing the Big Picture ...

Change has three facets.

- Reacting to Changing
- Creating Change
- Controlling Change

Without a decent overview you often cannot assess, whether impacting change is heading the right direction. It needs a certain distance and additional input from many sources to make this judgement. This takes some effort and time. - It is a

do it? - Yes, but would they?

Requirement No 1: Manager have to see and judge certain things

In a changing world this good judgement needs certain attitudes:

- **COLLABORATIVE INTENTION**

You cannot expect others to give you all the information you want, without giving something back, that helps their work. You have to see a WIN WIN situation in the first place.

- **NON DEFENSIVENESS**

Whatever information, view or opinion comes your way, be open and try to actively find out, why this could be a good idea, instead of closing up in the sense of "nothing for me/us".

- **LISTEN & LEARN from others**

This is often heard and taught, but esp. for managers very difficult. You have to be ready to question all your beliefs and intentions to be open enough for new approaches. It rather contradicts the core belief of managers who would always know what they have to do next.

Of course, this still appears to be pretty easy in theory, however, in practical life this becomes pretty challenging. Your sources often cannot separate facts from their own beliefs and feelings. True facts become something that is hidden behind words, body language, intentions, wants and the perception of the other.

Creating a common Truth

Everybody has his own perceptions, views and interpretation of the truth. We cannot help it, it just works that way. Forming a collaborative approach, where many individuals contribute to reach a common goal is not a natural thing. It is something that needs someone, who is aware of his role and who creates a communality / alignment so that others have the same intention. These others are individuals who need to share the same vision and goal, but would still be free to contribute in their own best way. Leaders of tomorrow will have to give others something so they are engaged and interested to reach it. They represent a truth that is worth it.

Requirement No 2: Truthfulness

Leadership requires the competence of representing truth

- **SELF-AWARENESS and AWARENESS OF OTHERS**

Leaders cease to suppose and make simple assumptions that suit their intentions. They respect other peoples' significance, competence and social roles and would meet them on equal eye hight. Openness and mutual appreciation drives the relationship with others.

- **RESPONSIBILITY and ACCOUNTABILITY**

there, where it belongs and where people understand how to control it.

Accountability is different. Leaders create a truth and convert this into a common attraction. They are making choices that create profits and costs. These decisions create the accountability whereas the responsibility is somewhere else. People must be fully accountable for their choices.

Viewing this as a competency it includes a lot of consequences for trusting others, communications skills, decision making preferences, emotional competencies and mental strengths.

Creative Strategies for a Common Success

Problems by definition are "unsolved issues". There is nothing bad about them, thus they need to be solved. In a collaborative world you wouldn't say "you caused it so you better solve it" but you would be able to find someone who can be made responsible to provide the best of all solutions. Accusing and blaming are alien in a collaborative environment, because with a high level of engagement and know how, being responsible for the outcome, problems are seen as something normal and inevitable - points to learn from.

Requirement No 3: Transformation competencies

Leaders of tomorrow have to be positive. They have to create an attractive vision that is so compelling that others choose to follow it and regard it as their truth. While there is so much negative energy around that pulls people down and sucks their energy, leaders have to be able to transform this into a perspective that conveys hope and personal benefit for each of the team members. This transformation process will start with yourself and your own mindset.

- **RADICAL POSITIVISM**

unless people are expressively harmful, offensive and mean, you will always find good reasons why people believe that they are doing something good. Creativity is best trained by the imagination that your most adverse beliefs and strangest reasoning may anyway have a good reasoning behind it. You will always be able to learn from it.

- **LANGUAGE & THOUGHT**

Language forms our mind and takes a great influence on our opinions and the way we present them. While I am not saying that we need a thought control, that limits our thinking, I am indeed asking us manager to control our thoughts that takes care that we stay on the positive side. We must avoid negative thinking that is lead by negative words that would only lead us into negative judgements and thoughts.

- **LEADING BY ASKING QUESTIONS**

Management used to be the "**science of the exclamation mark**". It now becomes the "**science of the question mark**". There is a whole cosmos of questions. While in English there are the big 6 "W" (Who, why, when, what, where, how) in German these are 44 different Words that mark a question.



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positive about an opinion or a persons contribution does by no way mean that you share this view or opinion. However, you should be grateful that the person shared it so everybody can think about it and reflect and learn from it. This is starting the struggle for a common view, opinion, truth and finally goal.

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Felix Wiesner is the founder and managing Partner of my-Employee GFCI GmbH, founded in 2001. The company specializes in Employment Testing with a focus on succession management. Our People Analytics help the management in their own development and their strategic workforce planning and performance management. Felix Wiesner is also Member of the BDU e.V. Germany.

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Creative Strategy, Collaborative Leadership,
Competency Assessment



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