

21 The 10 mistakes I made as a traditional manager

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had to change many of my habits during the digital transformation of my organisation. And in this episode, I'll share with you the 10 mistakes I've made when I was still a traditional leader, and what I've learned doing instead, so tune in for this episode and find out if maybe you're making the same mistakes as I've made. Now my first biggest mistake comes because I used to be a good student. And so I tried to deliver everything that was expected from me. And I did that because in school, that was the way to get good grades. So if I did everything that was expected for me, I would get good grades. If I didn't, I would be punished with bad grades. So this is a habit that is deeply ingrained in me. And that has served me very well in school, but also in my early career, because I got promoted if I could deliver. And so this was really deeply ingrained in me. But because of all the things that I had to do, and the fact that requests were coming from everywhere, for me mail from meetings from people I didn't know from friends from my family from colleagues in meetings, WhatsApp, I had requests coming from everywhere, but also So the tasks I had to deliver were less and less the limited. making a video, I could always improve it, I could always do more research for a project, I could always align more. So I had to define when I would stop. And so trying to deliver everything that was expected from me, in a very good way was not possible anymore. It almost led to me burning out. So what I had to learn instead was to focus and focus men saying no to people saying no to opportunities and saying no to treads, but that was something that I had learned because I felt very uncomfortable when I said no to somebody, or when I said no to something, because I had the feeling that I wasn't delivering what

was expected from me, and that maybe I would get punished for that. So I don't know about you just look at your habits. Are you still trying to deliver everything that is expected from you? Or is it already very easy for you to focus to say no. And to let go of all the things that you couldn't deliver, and to be okay with disappointing people. So the second mistake I was making was that I worked very hard. And that I became really good in managing my time. Because like I said, I had more and more things to do. And I had more and more expectations coming from my shareholders, from my management from headquarters from my employees. So I had all these things to do. And so what I first did instead of focusing was that I tried to manage my time better and better. So I took courses about time management, I took the course getting things done, which is really great, and so on. I became really good at managing my time. It even became better when I became a mother because I had also to manage all the things of my family of my kids. On top of the things I had to manage at work. So I became this really Queen of time management and everything was scheduled, almost to the minute you should have seen my calendar, everything was scheduled. And I was really really good in juggling, and and holding all these balls in the air. But what was happening is in working this heart, and in managing my time, I slowly started to lose my energy. And because I didn't have this energy anymore, I was starting to make mistakes. I was starting to, to also resist some changes. I wasn't learning new things. And I started to get in this vicious circle where I was losing more and more of my energy making mistakes, I had to correct his mistakes had even more to do started to manage my time even better. But in the process, I completely lost my energy and almost burned out. And so what I had to learn to do instead, and I realised this, especially when I was the CEO of an organisation in the middle of a digital transformation, I had to manage my energy first. And it became, in fact, my number one job to manage my energy. Because I was facing all these challenges. I had to focus and to learn saying no to things, and I couldn't do that if I was exhausted and stressed. But when I had energy, that's when I could tackle a lot of challenges. That's when I could handle a lot of bad news. That's also when I had the most creative ideas. That's when I could get out of my comfort zone and learn new skills, like for instance, focusing and not delivering everything that was expected from me. So instead of working hard and managing my time, I had to learn to manage my energy. Instead, it became my number one job as CEO. And now as a manager, or as a CEO of a startup, it still is my number one job, whatever I do, I will always first manage my energy. If I'm overwhelmed, I don't know what to do anymore what to start anymore or if I'm having bad thoughts, because I think I'm not good enough, or I'm going to fail or if I have failed and I'm having bad thoughts, because of that, in the past, I would take action I would put a lot of things in place and manage my time fairly well. Now when I notice it, because I still make mistakes. When I notice it, I will stop everything and manage my energy first. And with this high energy, I will start seeing new possibilities, I will start being creative, and I will have the energy to tackle whatever I face and to put the best actions in place. So what about you? Are you very good in managing your time? Or are you better in managing your energy before your time so I'm not saying that you shouldn't manage your time anymore, you still have to do that. But first manage your energy. I'm interrupting my own podcast to share a great opportunity. I'm hosting a free webinar on the three

leader shifts you should make to be successful in fast changing digital times, or three secrets to build a meaningful life and organisation. I've already inspired thousands of leaders with these codes. To intuitive strategies, and given this keynote in large organisations in several countries, it will help you understand the mistakes organisations and leaders make, what they should do instead and why being human and meaningful is even more important in this digital world. Go To www.qileader.com/masterclass to enrol or to the show notes of this episode at the end of the webinar. I'll also shortly talk about my programme from Solvay Brussels School, Leading authentically in digital times. It has already helped hundreds of leaders transform have more impact, find their motivation back and stay relevant in today's fast changing digital times. It has also transformed the culture and mindset in large organisations. Now back to our episode, my third mistake was that I was mainly action oriented. So when I saw something that wasn't working very well, I would do something about it, I would take action. When I saw an opportunity, I would do something about it. So I'm very action oriented. But the problem was that sometimes I was in this loop where whatever action I was taking, I didn't get the result that I wanted. And that's worse because being action oriented wasn't enough anymore. I had to learn to manage my interpretations, or my mindsets or my beliefs, whatever you want to call it, before my actions. And that was really crucial because in these fast changing digital times, or in these disruptive times, sometimes things are changing drastically. And if I was still viewing My market with my old mindsets, I couldn't see some actions that were possible for me in front of me. So I really had to learn to manage my mindset, my interpretations of situations, or my beliefs before my actions. And that's when I suddenly saw possibilities that were not visible to me before. And let me illustrate this with an example from the music industry. At some point in the music industry, people were downloading music illegally. And the traditional players. Their interpretation was that people were stealing music, and everything that they put in place was based on that interpretation. They started having actions of shutting down platforms, lawsuits, sensibilisation campaigns, but they still didn't still didn't get the result they wanted their revenues kept declining, then you had other players like apple, Spotify Deezer with the same effect. People are downloading music illegally. They saw another interpretation, they saw that people wanted a music experience. And with that interpretation, they had other actions in place. They started these platforms that we all know today, like iTunes, Spotify and Deezer. And they increase their revenues, same facts, different interpretations, different actions and different results. And so we should always learn to manage our mindsets, our interpretations before our actions and be really aware of the things that might stand in our way and that we are not yet seeing. So how about your mindset? Do you believe that you have the mindset that will help you reach the outcomes that you want? What about your organisation? Now I have a whole episode about how you should manage your mindset. Just go to episode number, I think it's four or five, just check on my platform. And you will find this episode about how can you manage your mindset. Now my fourth mistake was that I wasn't aware of my habits. So I think it's 95 or maybe 98% of what we do is out of habit. And as I told you, at the beginning of this episode, my habits that had served me very well in the past, like being action oriented, managing my time doing everything that is expected

from me and that the three mistakes that I talked about in the beginning of this episode. Well, those habits there were no standing in the way of my own success. But the problem was that I wasn't aware of these habits at first. And when you're not aware of your habits, then you are not at choice. How can you choose to change your habits? If you don't even know that these are habits that you have? For instance, as soon as somebody asks you something, you immediately say yes. Because otherwise you might disappoint that person. Or you might not be seen as a very friendly or helpful person. Well, that habits might stand in the way of your success. Or maybe you have a habit like being enthusiastic about new things. And so every time you have a new opportunity, you want to seize that opportunity, but then you don't manage to finish things very well. And so maybe that is a habit that you should change as well. So I wasn't aware of my habit. So what I had to do instead was observed myself and really analyse what were the habits that I had. Were these habits serving me now or standing in the way of my success. And some of the habits that I have are still serving me, but not in all situations. So I really have to be aware of my habits of the situation I'm in and what habits do I want to carefully built to be successful in the future? So the fifth mistake that I was making as a manager or as a leader, was that I worked mainly on strategy. So we made this great plans, we made this great action plans define the strategy, and then we would implement it and everything would be okay. But of course, it wasn't the case. Because what was happening is that we didn't have the appropriate culture in our organisation to really implement our strategy very well. As the culture is the sum of the habits of everyone in the organisation, we had to change the habits of everyone in the organisation starting with mine. So instead of mainly working on strategy, which I know is a mistake that a lot of managers are making, they're working on action plans, on strategy on projects, but they don't work enough on culture and people. And we often hear the sentence culture eats strategy for breakfast. But as the culture is the sum of the habits of the people in your organisation, it's the habits that will eat your strategy for breakfast. So I had to learn to work and to spend a lot of my time and energy on changing the culture of my organisation and if you are a team You should do that as well change the culture of your team. And if you are an individual leader without a team, you should work on changing your habits before only working on strategy. So what I had to do instead was work on the culture of my organisation before working on the strategy. And I've already told this story in another episode, but I will shortly tell it during the transformation of my organisation when I was a CEO, my shareholders that wanted to sell the organisation. And so twice, I had my biggest competitors who wanted to buy us. And so twice, I had to tell them our whole strategy, every plan we had, every financial result we had, every analysis we've made, we had to share everything with them. So they knew when We weren't going to launch something, how we were going to do it? What were the steps to achieve that, and then they didn't by us. And it felt like playing poker with only my cards on the table. And still, we reached better results than our competitors. They knew everything, but they didn't have the appropriate culture to implement our plans fast enough. So we could win because we had worked a lot on changing the culture. So how about you and how about your organisation? Are you working mainly on strategy, on processes on plans on projects? Or are you also spending a lot of time working on people habits

and on your culture, and that is what I teach in my programmes. I help leaders and I help organisations change the culture. within their organisation, and with that new culture, they have the foundation to really implement their plans very rapidly and to become really HL and to be able to seize much more opportunities than their competitors. So work on your culture, then my sixth mistake was that I spoke a lot to convince people because in the past in the organisations I had work in the meetings were very chaotic. So we had meetings to talk about projects or processes, but these were very chaotic. And if I didn't speak, I wasn't listened to. And so I had learned to really speak a lot and to convince people but unfortunately, at a certain point, I realised that the problems that we had to solve became more complex and I could solve them by myself anymore. We really needed a team to solve these issues. And what are the best functioning teams, those are the teams where you have psychological safety, but to have psychological safety research shows that you have to give equal speaking time to everyone in your team, and also to show empathy. And so instead of talking a lot to convince people, I had to learn to listen instead. And by listening, that's how we got the best ideas because maybe some people that were not used to be listened to, they had really valid things to say, and to add to our plans. So I really had to learn to listen, instead of talk a lot to convince. So how good are you at listening? Or when was the last time you were listened to Order last time you deeply listened to somebody? And what about the meetings in your organisation? Are people listening to each other? Or are the meetings very chaotic. And if you don't speak out loads, then you're not being listened to. And we even had to implement different methodologies and ways of working so that we could all be listened to, instead of having these chaotic meetings where everyone talks and talks, so things like a world cafe, or like taking turns in talking for two minutes, or collaborative tools. Now, the seventh mistake that I was making was that I solved issues too rapidly, because probably like you, I hate issues, and I hate problems. And when I face a problem, usually I really feel bad and I feel bad. Somewhere in my body, and I have like a compressed chest, I might have a knot in my in my throat, I have tense shoulders, I really feel bad when I face an issue when I think I'm going to fail. And so I want to escape this feeling. And because I want to escape this feeling, the habits that I had, which was that I solved issues too rapidly, because then I would get rid of the issue. And I would feel good again, in my body and in my mind, but the problem was that I was solving these issues too rapidly. And so instead of working on root causes, I was only solving symptoms. And that was how I started working really, very operationally, and issues kept coming up new issues or the same issues came up again. And that's how I become really this firefighter working there. We hard on solving a lot of issues, but without really working strategically. So instead of solving issues too rapidly, what I had to learn to do instead was stop and analyse the root causes of an issue and solve the root causes instead of solving only the symptoms of that issue. So just look at yourself for a second. Do you take the time to stop to analyse an issue to work on solving the root causes, and only then act or two, you want to get rid of the issues as fast as possible and work mainly operationally. And I see that happening a lot in organisations today. A lot of leaders they're running, running from one meeting to the other from one task to the other, only working operationally and they're not taking the time. anymore to

pause, to step back and to analyse things. And it doesn't have to take that much time. And in fact, in the end, you will save time, because you will have less and less issues to face. And then my eighth mistake was that I was working on improving my weaknesses, because in my evaluations, every year, the same things came up. And it was really strange, because I'm really good at thinking out of the box. I'm really good at having these creative ideas in doing things differently, but I'm not very good in following processes, rules and structures. And so every year on my evaluation, I would get the notification that I should improve that weakness. But then I noticed that when I was improving my weaknesses that were in fact, going along with my strengths, I was becoming an average manager. And so that's when I realised that not only me, but everyone in the organisation should work on building their strengths, and then collaborate for the weaknesses. For instance, if I would work with a colleague that is very detail oriented, then we will in planning an implementation with my IDs that are out of the box and really challenging the status quo, we would form a great team and which great results but when you try to push everyone to improve the weaknesses, you get average people and you get average teams. So that's when I had that's when I realised I should keep improving my strengths and collaborating on my weaknesses. So what about you? Are you working on improving your weaknesses? Or do you collaborate for these weaknesses? And the ninth mistake that I was making was that I wanted to control everything and avoid chaos at all costs. I hate chaos, because it makes me feel like I don't have control over two things. But what I had to learn was, if I wanted to focus, for instance, it meant saying no to things. And when I said no to these things, or when I was ignoring some things, they would not solve themselves. magically, they would generate chaos that I had to learn to accept. And so ironically, it's by learning to let go and accept this chaos, that I got more control over my life and over my results. So it's really ironic, I had to learn to let go to be able to have better results and more control over the situation. But the problem was is that it was very hard for me to let go. And that is because you cannot let go mentally Just think about it. When somebody just says to you, relax, just let go, it will go away. Often it doesn't work for me at least it makes me even more tensed. So instead, how can you learn to let go? It's by letting go to your body. Because when you have a relaxed body, because you have been exercises, you had a massage, you had a good laugh, you went on holiday, that's when it becomes easy to let go, then you don't care as much about things that seems so important to you before. So instead of controlling everything, I had to learn to let go. And by learning to let go, I was a choice. I could choose to control or to let go and a lot of leaders They don't have that choice. And because they cannot let go, they control all the time. And they cannot focus and they cannot be successful in these fast changing digital times. So how about you? Are you trying to control everything? Or are you able to let go now and the last mistake that I've made? Well, I've made, of course, even more mistakes than these, but these were the 10. I wanted to focus on in this episode. The last mistake that I was making is that I was showing strength in all situation. I had always been, I think I'm very strong. But I always had this ID that as a leader or as a person, I had to show strength in all situation. And so I had become this super woman that would never show weakness that everything was always under control. Everything was okay, I was going to handle this. And by showing up as this superhuman woman, I

was alienating my colleagues from me, they couldn't connect to me anymore. And not only that, but it was only it was only a mask that I was wearing, because the more I was wearing this mask of this super woman that everything was okay. The more I felt that inside, something was not working anymore. I wasn't connected to myself anymore. And to what I deeply cared about, it was like I was on this AutoPay pilots, everything is going to be okay, I'm going to handle this. Don't show your weaknesses. And so this wasn't working anymore in these fast changing digital times because people didn't feel connected to me anymore. I really had the feeling that I had to take All the responsibility on my shoulders as a leader and that, that way, I would protect the people in my team and in my organisation. But it wasn't working because first of all, it was very heavy to take all that responsibility on my shoulders was really, really heavy. And I had meetings or I had coaching sessions with my coach, where I realised that I couldn't continue like this anymore, it was too heavy. But on top of that, it wasn't working, because all I was doing was alienating the team members and they weren't following me anymore and my vision, they didn't believe in me anymore, because I was showing up as this superhuman that I wasn't, and they couldn't relate to me anymore. So what I had to learn to do instead was to show my vulnerability And to just say, I don't know, to just say we have this issue. I don't know how I'm going to solve this or how we're going to solve this. But I know I will find an answer. So I showed my vulnerability. And I want to CL here again. It's when I managed to show my vulnerability that people started really to follow me and to follow my vision. But also it was for me showing my vulnerability, which required more courage than simply showing my Superwoman mask. So I had to learn to show my vulnerability to just tell how I felt to just say to people, this is how I feel. I don't feel well. I feel like quitting, but I won't quit. It's going to be okay. I know. We will be able to solve this but for the moment I feel sad. I feel like I want to give up. And I'm going to work on my energy before coming back to you with a plan or with a plan that we're going to work on together, of course. So I had to learn to show my vulnerability to become stronger as a leader. So I wonder how good are you in showing your vulnerability to your colleagues at work, or even maybe, to your family and your friends because I wasn't even showing my vulnerability to my friends anymore, because I had the feeling that if I would show that it would crack and everything would fall down, and it didn't happen yet. When I started doing it, of course, it was hard in the beginning, I cried a lot. I even cried at work. But this made me human and made people really want to follow me and my family. Because they realised I was simply human and doing my best, and they could be human as well and do their best as well. Nobody has to be perfect, because perfection is boring. And it's not even possible. So these were the 10 mistakes that I had made when I was still a traditional leader. And I have to admit this, I'm still making these mistakes at times. I'm far from being perfect today. And I'm just going to go over these 10 mistakes again. So the first one was, I was trying to deliver everything that was expected from me, instead of focusing. The second one was that I worked hard and manage my time instead of managing my energy. The third one was that I was mainly action oriented. Instead of learning to stop and manage my mindsets, my interpretations, my beliefs before my actions, the fourth One was that I wasn't aware of my habits. So what I had to do instead was observed myself and be aware of the habits that were not serving me anymore and build new habits. The

fifth mistake was that I worked mainly on strategy, and tasks, and to do and processes and projects, but not enough on culture and people. The sixth mistake was that I convinced a lot by talking and I had to learn to listen instead. The second mistake is that I solved issues too rapidly, and I had to learn to stop, take a step back and analyse things instead. And I could only do that by learning to accept what I was feeling when I was facing these issues. The eighth mistake is that I worked mainly on improving my weaknesses instead of working on improving my strengths and collaborate For those weaknesses, number nine was that I tried to control everything and instead, I had to learn to let go. And the last one was that I showed strength in all situation, instead of showing my vulnerability, so what are the mistakes you are making? And what is the habit that you would like to work on first? In my next episode, I will talk about your motivation. What if you have lost your motivation at work? Should you then quit and find a new job? Or is there may be something that you could do instead of quitting? So I'm going to share with you how you could find your motivation back at work. So subscribe to this channel if you want to receive the next episode automatically. And also subscribe if you want to have a meaningful life and organisation.