

impact

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A Leadership Magazine

BUILDING BRIDGES

After divisive situations

THE APPRENTICE

5 things they got wrong &
5 they got right

CHIEF ENABLING OFFICER

Reflecting on a crucial part of
the CEO role

A STORY

A career on autopilot or active
choices?



hello

Great to see you - welcome to the 4th issue of **impact!**

It's October already, time sure flies.

This month we focus on how to build bridges after divisive situations, what we can learn from the TV-series 'The Apprentice' and how important enablement is at work. And there's a story about being proactive about our career choices.

We would love to hear your thoughts on the topics. Please connect via www.2020visionleader.com. Thanks.

Enjoy the read!

Mandy Flint & Elisabet Vinberg Hearn

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BUILDING BRIDGES AFTER DIVISIVE SITUATIONS

Here's how to bring warring parties together

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Have you ever observed two opposed sides attacking each other, arguing their points, maybe even pointing out how stupid or ill-informed the other side's arguments are? If you have, you have probably also wondered if there ever can be a way for them to unite or see eye to eye again.

Well, they can of course, but it's not necessarily easy and it doesn't happen overnight.

Take the situation following the UK's EU Referendum in 2016 for example, which so successfully (but oh so sadly) divided the country in two firm opposite corners of the 'boxing arena'. Feathers were severely ruffled, people experienced all sort of emotions (about the other side); pain, anger, sadness, frustration and more. And even 4 years later, it's not quite over yet.

Look at any political election and you often see the same thing. Political divides are emotional and they are all around us most of the time.

This can happen at work too, in sports, in families – anywhere where there are people involved.

Wherever it takes place, in order to bring people together after a divisive situation, some key things need to happen:

Willingness

There must be a willingness to want to unite again. This may not be readily at hand, and so someone needs to take the lead to invite into discussions, to make those people who are reluctant see that it is possible to come together, to build bridges. Listen to people's concerns. When people feel heard, they are more likely to be willing to listen themselves.

Shared Vision

Find a shared vision or goal. Ask yourself: What do we have in common? What can we agree on? What do we want to achieve, that we can agree on? Encourage discussion around this, wherever possible involving people in finding and agreeing on what they have in common and have shared responsibility for. Raising the conversation to a shared vision can help loosen up locked positions.

Someone To Take Charge

Someone, often a leader (although this can of course also be a strong, informal leader, who has the ears and the trust of others) needs to show the way, to set a vision (involving others in this).

In times of uncertainty people often just want to be led, guided in a direction, focused on a path and told where they are heading.

Assume Positive Intent

Assume positive intent. Be prepared to think that people probably did the best they could. Think that people didn't set out to annoy, insult or overlook. Remember that when strong emotions are involved, those emotions can hijack people's behaviours and things may be said as a result, which aren't necessarily a true reflection of that person or group.

Get Practical

Once you know that people are willing to come to the discussion table and that emotions have abated, start getting practical:

...continued

- What will you do? What steps will you take on the road to your shared vision and goal?
- Who will do what?
- How will you hold each other accountable?
- How will success be measured? How will you know that you've been successful?
- Move into action.

Build A Sense Of Pride

We all need to know that what we do makes a difference; it is part of our human nature. Along with being heard and wanting to add value we want to feel part of something and usually something bigger than us. So feeling connected and feeling proud of what we are doing is paramount to reconstruction. Start to focus on the strengths, what is working well. What can you and others feel proud of. What have you done today to make you feel proud. It is the small things as well as the big things. Think about what you can celebrate and feel good about.

Be Emotionally Intelligent

Where there is conflict there are always emotions at play. When emotions are involved, it's not enough to just focus on a set of actions to build bridges between opposite sides. People also need to feel that they are being heard, that someone understands their concerns.

As long as people don't feel listened to they will not set aside their differences. They may pretend as if they have, but what you get instead is passive aggressiveness brewing. So be emotionally intelligent and be aware of your own emotions as well as others.

Manage these as part of the process. Be prepared to allow people to vent and have their say. Listen without judgment and calmly have your say too. Once the venting is over, people can come to some reasoning and that moves the conflict closer to resolution.

Don't ignore the emotions and how people feel.

And...

You Will Need To Repeat All Of This!

There will be plenty of challenges on the way when rebuilding damaged relationships and eroded trust.

So when you think you've done it all – you've listened, you've assumed positive intent, you've set vision and goals, you've planned and acted, evaluated and celebrated – you or the other party may well get off track, angered again by something someone does – and then you both need to go over your commitments to collaboration again. Re-affirm why coming together is so important and re-focus and re-ignite your efforts.

It's OK, that's how progress is made – step by step by step.



"IN THE MIDST OF CHAOS, THERE IS ALSO OPPORTUNITY"

Sun Tzu



LESSONS FROM 'THE APPRENTICE'

Yes, TV entertainment can be surprisingly educational

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Having watched the UK version of the reality TV series 'The Apprentice' on and off over the years has made us reflect on what leaders and organisations can learn from their trials and tribulations.

In The Apprentice the participants are divided into two competing teams. Each peer team really needs to work together to achieve tasks, with someone being chosen as the leader for each project. The two teams' results are then evaluated at the end of each project and one team wins, and at least one person on the losing team gets fired.

Watching the The Apprentice is sadly often entertaining for all the wrong reasons. A lot of it is like a "how not to behave in business if you want to impact others in a powerful and constructive way" master class that's being played out in all its glory.

We do of course understand that it needs to be entertaining and that participants are chosen with this in mind.

Here are five things The Apprentice candidates generally got wrong and 5 things they got right in a recent season, from a teamwork, peer to peer & winning collaboration perspective.

Most of these observations are trends that have been consistent over several seasons.

5 THINGS THEY GOT WRONG

1. Egocentric behaviours

Who wants to work with someone who's all about "me, me, me"? Egocentric behaviours where people keep promoting themselves, saying things like "I'm a natural born leader", "no one is here to make friends" and "I know I can beat anyone in this competition" are examples of this. Would you give it your all for someone who spoke like that? This egocentric outlook easily creates resentment in others and does nothing for team spirit. If you have to say "I am a natural born leader" then you are likely not.

2. The Blame Game

As soon as things start to go badly, the candidates are quick to point the finger at each other, at their peers. Sometimes this happens when the actual task is going on, but even more common is that it happens in the boardroom when people want to deflect negative attention away from themselves.

The problem with the blame game is that it lacks personal responsibility and therefore leaves the person pointing the finger looking powerless.

Respect is always possible in the boardroom, it is simply a choice of behaviour, and the best team members and leaders will always be respectful to others. As a peer you never know when your peers will end up in a new and different position and even end up as your boss in the future.

3. Lack of Planning

Many of the tasks are poorly planned. The teams quickly throw themselves into action mode, before first figuring out how they should operate together, how to communicate, report back etc. There's not enough alignment between team members and sub-teams, making sure they know they are all working in the same direction. One example of this from the current season was when the teams were arranging the evening events and team members were off selling tickets at different prices and with different contents.

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Taking the time to plan, organise and align efforts are important parts of teamwork and collaboration. The best and most successful teams invest time in this critical part of the process.

4. Not recognising each other's strengths

People are not fully listening to each other or figuring out how to best use the resources of the team. They all think they are there to promote themselves and that's obviously to some degree how it's been sold to them, but no one is an island, no one can win a task on their own, just like in real life! For example, in the season in question, when the teams were creating a virtual reality game, the person who had most experience in branding and graphic design was not put in charge of that task, and the outcome could potentially have been much more successful if those strengths had been valued and utilised. Using strengths in teams is a winning formula; using the people with the right skills for the job and acknowledging those strengths means the task is performed quicker, more productively and a better result is achieved. Within your peer group you can always use each other's

areas of expertise or strengths to get you to collectively achieve more.

5. Poor Communication

In pretty much every task, the sub-teams don't communicate enough with each other in order to align their purpose and their approach. As an example in this season, when presenting their virtual game Magic Shells, no one knew who did what. It was chaotic and looked unprofessional. Feedback as a tool for great performance is also largely overlooked. They either don't give feedback at all (they just roll their eyes), or they scream in frustration; there's very little in between. And as a result, no real change can happen, just conflict and friction. Finally, levels of listening are low, with candidates speaking over each other, resulting in them not hearing each other. Communication – or more importantly two-way communication – is crucial. In a peer group relationship two-way communication can be used to ensure you are efficient and more aligned together. Really listening to others is the component to watch out for here.

5 Things they got right

1. Having a clear goal

All tasks have a very clearly defined goal and success indicator. This helps them to start thinking about how to achieve that goal in the best possible way. With your peer group you can define goals even if they have not been given to you or if they are just needed to pull you together. If there is not a goal, then collectively agree on one.

2. Appointing a leader

For teamwork to happen, especially when under time pressure, you need a leader to quickly get the team going. And this principle is used by The Apprentice teams as they discuss who is most suited for the role with regards to that particular task. The leadership role is alternated from task to task, providing the opportunity for benefits of shared leadership. This can be a good way of utilizing strengths within your peer group. People often use this method for example when rotating the running or "chairing" of a meeting. It is a good way to work with peers, it builds trust and commitment.

...continued



3. Handling the fast pace

They are given very little time to carry out the tasks, just like how it can be in real life, and they show how it's possible to achieve results in a short period of time if you hustle. Using your peers to get things done at a quicker pace speed things up.

4. Reviewing the results

It's good to review the outcome of a task or project, to figure out what went well and what didn't. With peers it is a good source of learning, all results are a source of learning. By doing this you are creating a culture of learning amongst your peers.

5. Celebrating success

The task winners always get a real boost from getting a treat and thoroughly celebrating their results. Sharing in a sense of pride that comes from accomplishment can really build a team.

IN SUMMARY

Yes, The Apprentice is a great example of human interaction and how people impact one another in a high-paced, competitive environment. It's a reminder that no one can manage on their own - we all need each other.

The candidates are all peers, where one of them now and then needs to step forward and take a leadership role - just like at work. Hence there's a lot to be learnt from watching these interactions and reflecting on the impact they create, negatively or positively - as we all exist in peer groups where constructive collaboration is a must.

Do you see any of these not so effective behaviours at work? If so, what could you do to overcome them? What actions and behaviours can you display to create great teamwork and deliver desired results?

“THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A SELF-MADE MAN. YOU WILL REACH YOUR GOALS ONLY WITH THE HELP OF OTHERS.”

George Shinn





BE A CHIEF ENABLING OFFICER

How to use your leadership as an enabler

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

We're all familiar with the CEO, the Chief Executive Officer. Of course.

But how about the Chief ENABLING Officer? Have you met her/him?

This is a slightly different take on being a CEO. Nothing new about it per se; leadership was always about enabling others to do a great job. The difference lies in the awareness. Not all leaders think of themselves as enablers and then they won't be as enabling as they could be.

And make no mistake, this is true for all leaders, whether they are:

- a budding leader
- an informal leader who role models leadership behaviours
- a seasoned leader
- the top dog
- in any of the layers of middle management
- a project leader

In reality, if you are any type of leader, it's your job to ENABLE others to do a great job.

Sure, you may say – but how?

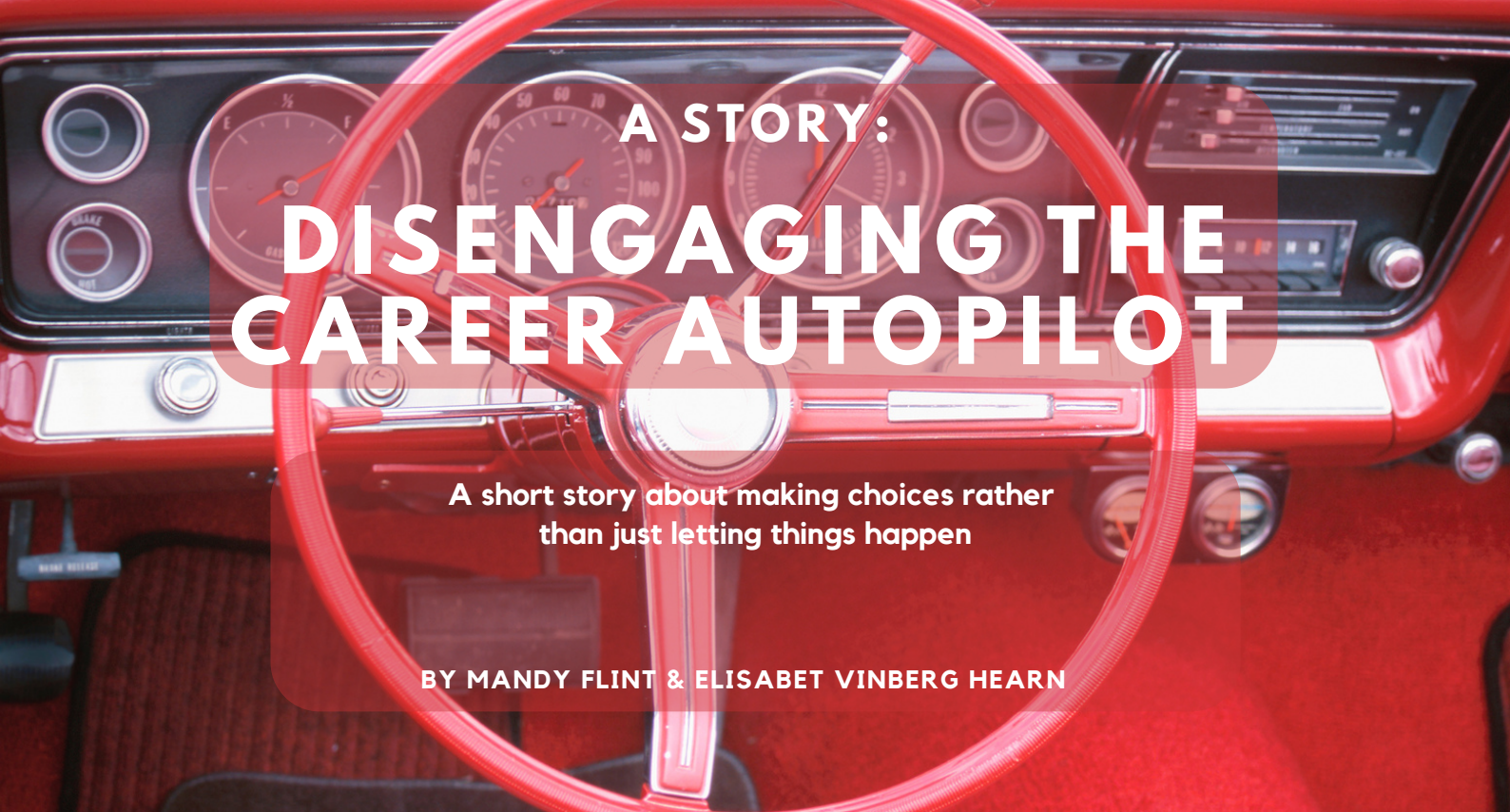
Well, there are many ingredients to enablement, but how about this as a start:

- Making sure team members have the tools and resources they need to do their jobs (eg. Technical equipment, working space, adequate time etc).
- Removing obstacles (eg. Building relationships with other teams/departments so that your team members can get help and collaboration when and where they need it).
- Allowing people to do the job the best way they can (eg. Seeing people's unique strengths and helping them to use them and develop them, to really play to those strengths).
- Encouraging and prompting team members to collaborate with each other, recognising that people can achieve more together than they ever can on their own. Sharing information and encouraging it.
- Encouraging innovation, involving people to contribute through their skills, experience and knowledge – getting creative and being OK with it.
- Allowing for mistakes, knowing that progress requires taking risks, trying things out to adjust and adapt solutions for the future – always learning from those new mistakes (not repeating old mistakes).
- Coaching people to learn from the mistakes, finding the learnings and new solutions they bring. Letting people try new things as part of their ongoing development.

The greatest leaders don't create followers, they create new leaders. By enabling others, you help them grow into the best person they can be. It's a pretty cool feeling too.

What more can you do to enable those that work with you?

Who will you enable today?



A STORY: DISENGAGING THE CAREER AUTOPILOT

A short story about making choices rather
than just letting things happen

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

"I've got a job interview tomorrow!" Sarah looked excited as she whispered this juicy bit of news to Philip, her colleague of three years, as they waited at the counter for their morning coffees. "But don't tell anyone!" She put her finger to her lips to make her point.

"Don't worry" he assured her, "your secret is safe with me. But I have to admit that I am a bit shocked, you haven't said anything about looking for other jobs. What's happened? When did you decide to do that?"

"Well, I've been thinking about my job situation for a while now. To be honest, it started with me not getting that promotion I was hoping for last month. It really made me stop and think, you know, if I'm doing the right thing and all of that."

"Come on, what kind of a vague comment is that! What do you mean?"

"Come on. I'll explain on the way."

With steaming paper cups in hand, they made their way down the road towards the office. Sarah turned to Philip and continued:

"So what I meant is that I've come to realize I have never really made any proper choices when it comes to my career. If I'm brutally honest, I seem to have drifted into jobs, driven by circumstances more than anything else"

And I guess there's nothing wrong with that, but lately I've come to question whether I've been too lazy about it, in just drifting I mean. That's why I sat down and started thinking about what I'm good at and what I enjoy doing and what I would do if anything was possible. You see, part of me went for that promotion because I was expected to. I'm not even sure exactly who expected me to go for it, but it felt like what I was supposed to do, in order to show my ambition.... Does that make any sense, do you know what I mean?"

Philip's forehead produced a number of lines across it as he considered his answer.

"Yeees" he said with some hesitation, "I think I do. There seems to be a certain path to follow if you want to progress in our business unit, and the leadership roles that come up are pretty much the only way to go."

"Exactly! But nothing is given, we always have a choice and that's what I've decided to do something about. When I finally thought about it, I wasn't even sure that I wanted to become leader of a team. And this has made me decide that I want to be in the driver's seat of my own career from now on." Sarah gave a determined nod. They had reached the office and Sarah lowered her voice and said: "I'll tell you more later. Wish me luck for tomorrow!"

...continued

When she exited the lift on her floor, she raised a hand in goodbye and headed down the corridor to her office.

What she hadn't told Philip was that the job she had applied for was within their company. She had found out that a new project was being kicked off, with a focus on sustainable business practices, and this was something that interested her a lot. Their company, as so many in the manufacturing industry, had more and more pressure on it to consider responsible use of natural resources as well as considering the people impacted by the business practices.

The subject got Sarah all fired up, she could feel the energy surge through her body as she thought about what the job might entail and how she would be able to contribute to something that really mattered to her in a way that she hadn't previously focused on. If she got it, that was!

Either way, this was the time to make choices and take control of her career - and it felt good.



ANALYSIS

Sometimes career choices happen by chance, and there's nothing wrong with that. Chance can be very fortunate and relevant at times. But as Sarah's story describes, it also makes sense to be proactive about the choices we make. Our career can and should be a living thing, something that we regularly reflect on, making sure we go in a direction that matters to us, engages us and where we are able to do our best jobs, while continuously learning. There is great value to be had in being more intentional about the path we want to take, what we enjoy and where we can really utilize our strengths.

And as a leader, this is also something you can encourage and coach others in. It's so easy for the autopilot to kick in, where weeks turn into months turn into years and people lose that sense of self leadership and empowerment that should be at the heart of a career. We've seen people have real aha moments when they actively take charge of their careers, recognising for example that they are exactly where they want to be right now but they had forgotten! And that kind of realisation is a great experience too as it reengages us with our role and responsibilities.

Yes, an autopilot is great at times, but don't let it run your life. At times we need to take control, turn off the autopilot and fly ourselves. Why not make a commitment to yourself for a quarterly or bi-annual check-in?

"NO MATTER WHAT THE SITUATION, REMIND YOURSELF, I HAVE A CHOICE"

Deepak Chopra

POLL RESULTS: LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES DURING COVID-19

The poll ran 7 May – 14 June.
We invited leaders from 20+ countries to participate.

WE ASKED: *What are you finding the most challenging in your leadership role during the COVID-19 crisis?*
Choose up to 5 answers.

104 responded (anonymously)



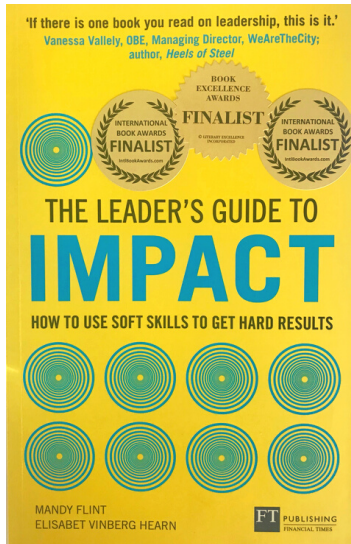
LEADERS' RESPONSES TOP 5 CHALLENGES

% OF RESPONDENTS WHO CHOSE EACH ALTERNATIVE

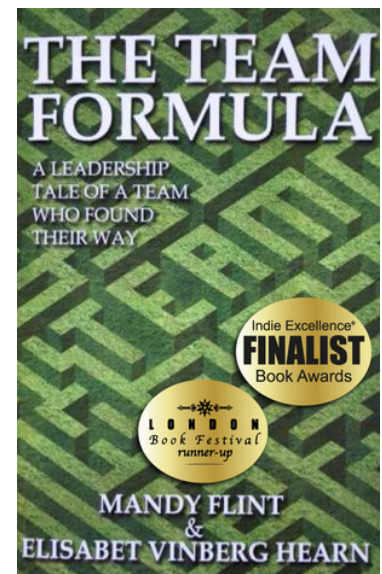


For full results and more information about the poll, please click here

CHECK OUT OUR AWARD-WINNING BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP



All the books are practical tools not just for individual reflection and action, but also for teams and leadership teams to work with and maximise collaboration and impact



"THE ABLITY TO READ AWOKED INSIDE ME SOME LONG DORMANT CRAVING TO BE MENTALLY ALIVE"

Malcolm X



impact a leadership magazine

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