



Lead through Love

Fourth Industrial Revolution with Rising Generations
Creating Demands on Better Workplaces

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ABSTRACT

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Fourth Industrial Revolution with Rising Generations Creating Demands on Better Workplaces

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In order to lead the employees during this exceptional time of technological revolution (4IR) leaders have to be equipped not only to help employees to survive but to thrive in it. This to the core challenging era requires a new kind of approach, an alternative to the traditional fear-based leadership style. For Millennials especially who are suffering from crucial challenges adapting to work life (*drastic rise in burnout*). Alarming past studies have shown that most North American workers are not engaged (*motivated on daily basis*) with their work. When the situation is so bad in the locomotive of global economy, one can only imagine the scale of the problem globally and understand its impact on productivity and ability of businesses to function properly.

The objective of this thesis was to find ways to improve leadership, utilizing the power of love as a tool (*more humane approach*) and then utilize these findings globally by helping leaders to create healthier workplaces. The main question this thesis sought an answer to was: What's love got to do with leadership? The applying part of this study aims to answer the question of commissioning company BaseN: How is it possible to maintain the engaging corporate culture when the company grows (*where love is seen as a critical success factor*)? Social sciences typical case study method was utilized enabling this research to conduct a descriptive and exploratory analysis of the commissioning company in a real-life context.

The result of this study is an opus Lead through Love, which will provide tools for better, more holistic, human and successful leadership.

Key words: Leadership, Love, HRM, Fourth Industrial Revolution

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GLOSSARY or ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS (choose one or other)

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
AI	Artificial Intelligence or <i>“Appreciative Inquiry”</i>
B2B	Business to Business
CEO	Chief Executive Officer or <i>“Chief Encouraging Officer”</i>
EI	Emotional Intelligence
FCEO	Female CEO (<i>see CEO</i>)
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resource Management
ICT	Information and communication technology
Industry 4.0	Fourth Industrial Revolution
IoT	Internet of Things
TAMK	Tampere University of Applied Sciences
WHO	World Health Organization

1 INTRODUCTION

“My dream is to get companies to open their eyes and to see the value of their employees and that they would start showing it. Empty talks do nothing with me if they are not backed up with acts”. – Juudit Ojansivu

Above a quote from a conversation on January 9th 2018 – about passion and visions concerning leadership – between the author of the thesis and Mrs. Corina Maiwald, the Chief Marketing Officer at BaseN Corporation. A conversation which led BaseN to offer collaboration for this thesis...

Story goes all the way back to fall 1998 and a visit at Marriott Newport in Rhode Island, USA for study purposes as the idea was to get familiar with international hotel chain and utilize all that in the final work ***“Marketing Strategies for Hotel Chains Based on Different Business Ideas”***. The most intriguing and inspiring part was to find out what the founder J. Willard Marriott had told about the secret of their success: ***“If you take care of your employees, they will take care of you!”*** That line has remained with me all these years and was even mentioned in bachelor’s thesis. (Ojansivu, 2009, 27)

Those words from Mr. Marriott have been like a lighthouse and have shown me the example about ***how things should be in companies*** and ***“assured me about the importance of humanity in strategic decisions making, even though how challenging and contradictory it can be.”*** (Ojansivu, 2009, 42) This thesis will continue from the previous point of view, with a closer look at what Marriott's ideology really means in practice.

LAP Lambert Academic Publishing published that thesis as a book in 2010 with the title ***“A New Direction – Strategic Marketing in Small Businesses, Case; Big Agenda Coaching”***. The back cover of the book included a wish about finding a company with good ethics for my master’s thesis. (Ojansivu, 2010)

That part was totally forgotten, until came January 2018 with BaseN offering a co-operation for a study and finding out that in their company, this idea has been

taken even further by the company CEO, Mr. Pasi Hurri, stating that ***“The critical success factor in management - and almost at any interactive position in modern work life - is indeed love. When you love your people and work, it is likely to be contagious and you'll suddenly unlock a tremendous potential from them.”*** (BaseN, 2011)

The passion for this topic comes especially from personal life experiences working in dysfunctional organizations – and from seeing suppressing and oppressive leadership around others and having to witness the devastating consequences of it.

My personal work experience ranges from being employed by global big player **Disney** (*Disneyland Paris*) which had 201 000 employees worldwide in 2018 (*Forbes, 2019b*), and from **Danske Bank** (*operating in 15 countries, mainly in Nordics*) (*Danske Bank, 2019*) as well as from several small and medium sized companies which operate globally – such as my employer, **Dynaset Oy** (*Dynaset, 2019*) or locally, to being employed by UN Headquarters’ diplomats in New York, USA.

It seems that there are way too many fear-based leaders in organizations and it just strikes: ***Where is the love?*** People with power use their authority against others way too often and we could do so much better. If we do not recognize our destructive patterns and habits in the first place, how could we ever change? Therefore, ***awareness is one of the keys.*** There really is a hunger for love, caring and compassion also within the workplace but way too frequently people are suffering from poor leadership (*lack of love*) which even causes them to get physically ill.

Even though love is quite rarely linked to business and leadership, some influential and world-known leaders understand that this – **love-based leadership** – is the only right and sustainable approach. This thesis will take a look at it extensively by examining love-based leadership worldwide and mirroring fear-based leadership in order to create an opus (*Lead through Love thesis*) for commissioning company BaseN to take into use and to continue to prosper, as well as for any other current or future global leaders to take ideas from.

As this topic love and leadership together is quite untapped area, it is possible that this research will raise more questions than it answers. When the prior research is absent the role of this study will be laying foundation for future researches.

This cutting-edge study reminds me about the story of my employer, DYNASET Oy, which was founded in 1986 by Mr. Reijo Karppinen. In the beginning the founder was told by multiple consultants how there is for need for “*his hydraulic equipment*”. It was partly true, he had to create the markets for his products by being pioneer. Today the company is 33 years old and a global leader of its industry, exporting to more than 70 countries proving sceptics wrong. (Konepörssi, 2019) Similar thoughts can be common also when combining leadership with love. In the beginning, the topic can be broadly questioned but the results can be seen by putting these ideas into use and testing.

The red thread linking this story from chapter to chapter is the pursuit to help companies to create comprehensively better workplaces by raising awareness what is beneficial and sustainable for both, companies and humans, and what is not. The theory taken into this thesis is supported by the real-life experiences from many organizations worldwide and the author’s voice can be read also between the lines.

#leadthroughlove

1.1 Commissioning Company – BaseN

The commissioner of this thesis, BaseN Corporation, is an IoT (Internet of Things) provider of ***scalable and fault-tolerant network and service management systems for telecom operators and large multinational enterprises***. (BaseN, 2019) BaseN is a company which is positioned at the forefront of the current era of technological change and leading the way.

The company was founded in 2001 in Finland (BaseN, 2019; Finder, 2019) and the company headquarters is located in Helsinki. Since its start the company has been a global player. (Maiwald, 2018, 27) The company has also subsidiaries in the United States (Sunnyvale, California) in the Netherlands (Amsterdam), in Czech Republic (Prague), and in Estonia (Tallinn), as well as local representation in the Middle East and Asia Pacific. (BaseN, 2018) BaseN is currently serving customers in over 80 countries globally. (Journal of Cyber Policy, 2019)

BaseN is an active player on advancing technological development through affiliates in various sectors in Finland and abroad. The affiliates of BaseN are for example Finnish Information Security Cluster (FISC), Finnish Industrial Internet Forum (FIIF), Cleantech Finland, The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Business Finland, Finnish Clean Energy Association, Technology Industries of Finland and National Defense Industrial Association. (BaseN, 2019)

One of the most recent news concerning BaseN was published on September 27th 2019 about Former Chief of Finnish Defense Forces, General Jarmo Lindberg, joining the company's Board of Directors. (BaseN, 2019) The CEO of the company, Mr. Pasi Hurri has stated that Jarmo Lindberg's expertise of understanding the geopolitical aspects is vital in the company's next phase of development. (Aamulehti, 2019)

The company has not raised any venture capital, and hence is financially and technologically independent and makes all decisions fully by itself.

1.2 Research Background and Objectives

“The aim of the research is to produce interesting new research results.”

(Gradutakuu, 2015)

The objective of this thesis is to find ways to improve leadership utilizing the power of love as a tool (*more humane leadership style*) in order to engage people with the companies they work for. The broader goal is to utilize these findings in businesses globally by helping leaders to create healthier workplaces with engaged and motivated employees at the core. Alarming research results show that as much as 70 to over 85 % of employees in the US are not engaged at their work or are even actively disengaged. (Gallup, 2017, 24).

As the situation is this significant in the locomotive of global economy, we can only imagine what will happen if this trend continues. Poor leadership and disengaged employees affect profitability and companies' abilities to function properly. Simply put: This situation screams for solutions.

The main question this thesis seeks an answer to is: **What's love got to do with leadership?**

The secondary question and the applying part of this study aims to answer the commissioning company BaseN's question: **How is it possible to maintain the engaging corporate culture while the company keeps growing (*where love is seen as a critical success factor*)?**

1.3 Research Methods

“Research is a systematic process of investigation and study of materials in order to understand a phenomenon by collecting, analyzing and interpreting data.” (Journal of Business & Economic Research, 2007, 65).

This research will utilize case study method which is typical for social sciences. Leadership style theories and their consequences are first examined followed by

study conducted for the commissioner concerning their company dominant leadership style, employee engagement and overall how people feel valued. (PressAcademia, 2018) Social sciences examine humans and their relationships understanding that human interactions are in the core of company success. (eNotes.com, 2019) Case study method enables this research to conduct descriptive and exploratory analysis of a commissioning company in a real-life context. (PressAcademia, 2018)

Descriptive research method is useful when there is not much prior knowledge about the current situation and it creates the foundation for further studies. (Scribbr, 2019) In this case it will help to find out the commissioning company current dominant leadership style. (Question Pro, 2019; Scribbr, 2019) The study will be conducted as an online survey and it will utilize both qualitative and quantitative research methods, however, not digging in deeper into reasons behind. (Kajaanin Ammattikorkeakoulu, 2019; Scribbr, 2019)

Qualitative research method can be utilized in this research by diving into the problem in order to gain insights about the research topic and helping to define the base idea and form the questions for (*partly*) quantitative study. (Snapsurveys, 2011) Qualitative research method works usually with smaller samples and enables observations and interpretations. (Rajaton, 2015) Qualitative research is characterized by the collection of data enabling as many reviews as possible. (Alasuutari, 2011, 84)

This study begins by exploring secondary data. It helps to get basic understanding and aids to form the questions for survey. Primary data is gathered by the researcher from the commissioning company through an online survey conducted to the company personnel in October 2019. Secondary data such as topic related books, articles and previous studies will be widely utilized as well, (Statistics How To, 2018) due to its cost effectiveness. (Statistics How To, 2018; SurveyGizmo, 2018) In addition, already cleaned and chewed (*processed*) data saves time, effort and resources. It is broadly available enabling researches to cut directly from collecting, sorting and analyzing primary data. (SurveyGizmo, 2018)

The work theory for this thesis is to present a wide range of viewpoints from a large variety of timely sources. As my thesis supervisor Shaidul Kazi nicely put it, *Thesis is Art of Writer*.

1.4 Structure of the Research

This work consists of two main parts. The first part is the theoretical part that explores the relationship between leadership and love in this revolutionary era from Chapter 2 to Chapter 5, having in mind the various challenges it includes. The second part (Chapter 6) consists of theory put in to practice (*applied sciences*) which reveals the results of the research to BaseN staff, including the author's recommendations.

Chapter 1 gives an introduction to the subject, opens its background and purpose. Chapter 2 discusses the challenges of this era (4IR) and how the digitalization and rapid change affect work and the challenges especially the Millennials face. Chapter 3 looks at the traditional leadership and examines how diversity and female leadership influence the success of a company. It also discusses how reverse leadership (*through inverted pyramid where the CEO appears at the bottom of the pyramid*) improves communication within organizations. Chapter 4 looks at organizational culture in general and explores how egalitarian (*modern, progressive*) company culture enables better communication and peer-management in all directions; not only from top to bottom, but also from employee to manager. Chapter 5 eventually explores these two types of leadership: fear-based leadership and love-based leadership. The physical effects or consequences of fear-based leadership are also explored, while exploring how to avoid negative consequences. Finally, some practical ideas will be shared to start love-based leadership in a company. Chapter 6 presents the results of online survey, as already mentioned in the previous paragraph. Chapter 7 contains the discussion and Chapter 8 concludes this thesis.

1.5 Limitations of the Study

Limitations of this study concern mainly the survey results in the case company. Based on the small and specific target group it is not possible to make broader assumptions about the results in relation to other companies without examining.

The theoretical part of this thesis, chapters from 2 to 5, can be utilized in broader context but it should be borne in mind that the theory is based more on Western (*egalitarian*) working culture and is aimed at more knowledge-based professionals rather than blue-collar labor environments.

2 CHALLENGES OF CURRENT ERA

2.1 Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)

"As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others." – **Bill Gates** (Forbes, 2013)

Starting point to this theory is to have a look on our current era. According to Professor Klaus Schwab, Founder and Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum (World Economic Forum, 2019a) **we are in the midst of the Fourth Industrial Revolution**. This revolution is combining physical, digital and biological worlds by utilizing artificial intelligence (AI), internet of things (IoT), 3D printing, mobile supercomputers, intelligent robots, virtual assistants such as Siri from Apple, self-driving cars, neuro-technical brain enhancements to mention only some. (Salesforce, 2018; World Economic Forum, 2019a)

This Fourth Industrial Revolution is not only disrupting economies and industries with tremendous speed (Salesforce, 2018; World Economic Forum, 2019a) but it is also challenging our belief what it is like to be human. (World Economic Forum, 2019a)

In order to lead employees during this exceptional time of technological revolution in almost every level of societies, leaders are required who are equipped to guide employees not only to survive but to thrive. **This revolutionary and to the core challenging era requires new leadership** approaches based rather on coaching than commanding, not driven by ego but empathy. Leaders who are emotionally capable (*emotionally intelligent*) to lead, manage, measure and reward. This concern not only the workforce who you need every day but increasingly numbers of remote working staff. (World Economic Forum, 2018)

Leadership then is more about influencing others to reach goals than using authority (Forbes, 2013) or being in charge. (Bryant, 2009, 175-176; Forbes, 2013) Leadership is about taking care of the ones who are to be led. (Alahuhta, 2018, 18; LinkedIn, 2019)

Leaders in charge of realizing the vision of a better work life with people being able to do their very best and to be inspired every single morning, to feel safe at work, and return home fulfilled. This all can be done when ideas, thoughts and experiences are shared collectively. (Sinek, LinkedIn, 2019) Peer-to-peer management, which will be discussed in chapter 4.3. opens up ways to new kind of leadership and communication.

In order to understand how to lead, there must be a knowledge on who are the ones who should be led. The following chapter opens up about the Millennials (*who are already in workforce*) and but also Generation Z who are entering the workforce.

2.2 Millennials and Generation Z Taking Over

The CEO of aTalent Recruiting, Niklas Huotari, states in his interview in HR Viesti magazine that Millennials live in a world where leadership is more humane than what it was for previous generations. Due to that their expectations are higher already from the very beginning. *Research conducted among young professionals revealed good communication skills being the main leadership skill they required from leaders. Also, a wish that their leaders are empathetic and someone who would genuinely desire to help them succeed. They want that their leaders trust them in being capable of performing the best they can and that they get both responsibility and freedom to work without micromanagement.* (HR Viesti magazine, 2019, 42).

Young professionals (*Millennials*) are raising the bar with their expectations on employers due to their unique upbringing during an era of revolutionary technology. In order to make them perform as good as they can and to utilize their unique skills, companies must understand their needs and realize that they differ from other age groups. (Open Sourced Workplace, 2019)

According to Kauppalehti (2019), young professionals *choose an employer* who is transparent and treats their employees right (*well*) and who offers a meaningful environment and culture.

This shows the change between previous generations where employers had greatest power on choosing who they want to hire. The overall publicity which results from this new era of intense global social media also puts more pressure on companies to look good in the eyes of public.

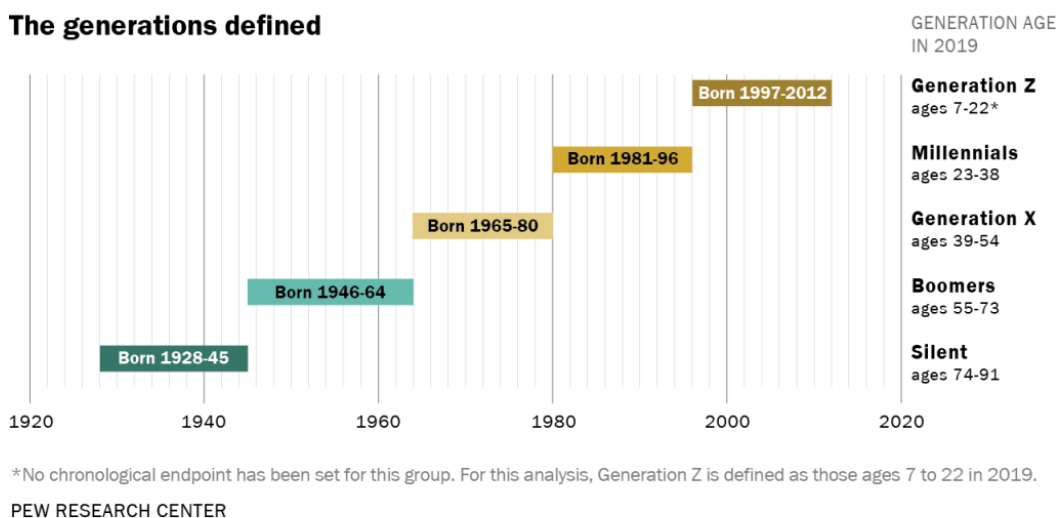


FIGURE 1. Generations defined. (Pew Research Center, 2019)

Millennials (*Generation Y, Gen Y*) encompasses people born between 1981 and 1996 who are now adults and are all considered to be of working age - between ages 23 and 38. Generation Z (*Gen Z*) means people who are born between 1997 and 2012, now being between 6 and 22 years old. (Pew Research Center, 2109) Figure 1 above shows the generations defined.

Not only are the Millennials and Generation Z raising standards and expectations towards their leaders but they are also having severe problems trying to adjust to adulthood, especially when entering to work and meet all the expectations in and out of work. The following chapter will reveal the epidemic rise of mental health issues and how especially Millennials are suffering from them.

2.3 Epidemic Rise of Mental Health Related Issues

Despite the decrease of physically burdening work, the actual working pace has accelerated and also the definition of physical workplace and worktime has blurred. This creates a risk for staff being overwhelmed and eventually getting sick. Something has to be done in order to prevent mental strain and deal with mental health problems. (Elomedia, 2019)

There are concerning news coming onto the surface about the mental health situation of Millennials especially. (BuzzFeed News, 2019) Recent study shows that the reason for 50% of Millennials and 75% of generation Z to quit their job in the US is related to issues with mental health. (Forbes, 2019d) The burnouts Millennials are suffering from are caused, for example, by longer work hours and money related stress (*stagnated salaries*) as well as loneliness. (Business Insider, 2019b)

The situation in Finland is showing the same problem. Terveystalo patient data reveals that one of four (25%) sick leaves in Finland is taken for mental health reasons. Further the data concludes that issues such as anxiety, depression and sleeping disorders **are the most common cause of sickness absence in Finland for those aged 20-29 (Millennials and Gen Z)**. Overall, mental health problems have rapidly become more common among young adults and also among 20 to 49 years old women and men. People between 60 and 69 years seem to have less problems with their mental health. (Iltalehti, 2019)

Burnout means lowered working capacity caused by chronic (*long-time*) stress such as work overload, poor management or lack of support. When prolonged, this situation causes deterioration of the ability to work, cynicism and isolation from the work community, and losing one's purpose. (Hyvä Terveys, 2019) The severity of losing purpose can be understood because of its link to depression, death and risk of a suicide. (Pessi, A. B., Martela, F. & Paakkanen, M., 2017, 107)

Burnout syndrome is characterized by feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion, increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism

related to one's job and reduced professional efficacy (*efficiency*). (The American Institute of Stress, 2019) It is like a never-ending race, the feeling that the accomplishment never comes. You never really get things done but the tasks just keep coming. ***“You feel burnout when you’ve exhausted all your internal resources, yet cannot free yourself of the nervous compulsion to go on regardless.”*** (BuzzFeed News, 2019)

Young adults can be subject to a great deal of mental and professional pressures at work and in their private lives, trying to balance career, trying to find a spouse or raising a family as well as getting less support from the work community when work has become more self-directed (*independent*) and mobile. They are also more likely to seek help with problems. (Iltalehti, 2019) Terveystalo is *“the largest healthcare service company in Finland.”* (Terveystalo, 2019)

Mental health disorders are already the most common reason for Finns to retire. And according to the Finnish Center for Pensions, depression is the single biggest cause for retirement on invalidity. ***“In 2017, around nine people retired daily due to depression in Finland.”*** (Yle, 2019)

The problem with these statistics is that burnout is not diagnosed disease in Finland. It is hence not covered by Kela (*Social Insurance Institution*), meaning one does not receive sickness benefits nor are employers obliged to pay. To get a sick leave for burnout at work, an employee will usually be diagnosed with a mental illness (*such as depression*). Also, burnout or fatigue is not enough as a symptom of depression so that people with such symptoms should not automatically be diagnosed as depressed. Fatigue is regarded as a normal reaction to excessive workload, just as sadness is normal after loss. (Hyvä Terveys, 2019)

However, finally in 2019 WHO (*World Health Organization*) has recognized burnout syndrome caused by work-related chronic stress for the first time as an official medical diagnosis. (American Institute of Stress, 2019; CNN, 2019)

Psychologist Herbert Freudenberger was the first one giving the description for the concept of (*staff*) burnout in 1974. (BuzzFeed News, 2019; CNN, 2019;

Frontiers in Psychology, 2019) The diagnosis has been debated by researchers ever since. And even though it has been a widely debated issue for over 40 years, the research on burnout has been concentrating more on “*causes and associated factors*” instead of developing specific diagnostic. There have been difficulties to differentiate depression and burnout – consensus here is a necessity in order to add burnout as disease. (CNN, 2019)

In order for a person to recover from burnout something needs to be changed and the job description reviewed. The person needs to be equipped to manage the stress and to learn ways to balance the burden and workload. Untreated burnout can lead to depression which is a much more serious health problem. (Hyvä Terveys, 2017)

In Finland this matter at workplaces is still quite hushed and silenced. The given diagnoses do not necessarily point to the correct origin of the problem (*work*), and hence the only given solution is a long sick leave and medication. Whereas, the problem should be tackled at its true origin, at work. Usually affected employees carry the entire weight themselves, when actually the employer should be the one carrying responsibility of overload, together with the employee.

2.4 Alarming Statistics of Employee Engagement

One broadly trending saying is “***Employees don’t leave companies, they leave managers***” – the most vocal ambassador being Brigitte Hyacinth. (LinkedIn, 2017) This is supported by the statistic on employee engagement and is linked to the other challenges in today’s work life described in this work.

The alarming results of employee engagement show that ***altogether 85% of the employees worldwide are either not engaged or are actively disengaged*** with their job and ***only 15% of the employees worldwide are engaged***. Globally, only 15% of employees are engaged to their work and 67% are not engaged to their work. The most worrying is the 18% of personnel, meaning every 5th employee, who are actively disengaged. (Gallup, 2017, 24)

Engaged employees are employees who are enthusiastic about their work and workplace and thus driving performance and innovation. Employees who are **not engaged** have lost their attachment with the company and because their needs have not been met, they do not give their best effort nor ideas. **Actively disengaged** means deeply resentful employees who are acting out and even damaging their workplace. (Gallup, 2017, 22-23)

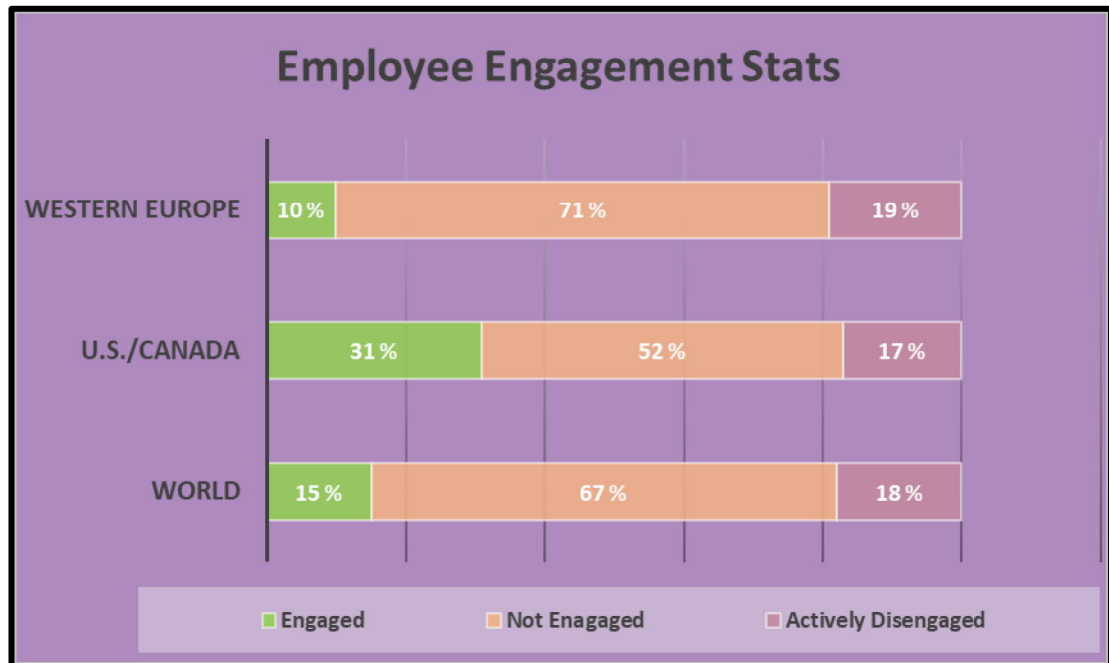


FIGURE 2. Employee Engagement Statistic in Western Europe, in U.S./Canada and Globally (*World*) according to Gallup (2017).

Figure 2 above shows employee engagement statistic in Western Europe, in U.S./Canada and in the World. Comparing to the stats worldwide, the employee engagement is in better shape in North America (*USA and Canada*) than in average globally. There, **over 30% of the employees are engaged** and about 50% are not engaged. However, the percentage of actively disengaged employees is quite similar with the global stats. (Gallup, 2017, 24)

Comparing the statistics of employee engagement in Western Europe to the stats of USA and Canada, we can see the difference. In Western Europe **only 1 out of 10 employees (10%) is engaged with their work** and over 70% are not engaged. To conclude, a total of approximate 90% of West European employees

are not engaged or are actively disengaged with their work. In North America the same percentage is only 70. (Gallup, 2017, 24)

There seems to be a void within European management teams putting the effort into leading people even though there is knowledge about the linkage of good management and leadership to higher engagement levels and then to results. And especially as increasing productivity by improving engagement would be relatively inexpensive. (Gallup, 2017, 85)

The reason for taking on specifically Northern Europe, U.S./Canada and the World has to do that the research is conducted in Finland (*Western Europe*), U.S./Canada has significance for the work as a global locomotive showing direction and so far leading an example of most engaged employees, and the world, in order to have a broader look on average statistics worldwide. Thus, being able to position the case company.

Overall, it is notable that engagement levels differ depending on the job. Employees in knowledge-based jobs are more likely to be engaged than factory workers (*or other repetitive routine jobs*). Knowledge-based professionals also have more opportunity to affect their work than the ones working in manual jobs. (Gallup, 2017, 25) In the future, however, more and more mechanized and repetitive routine work will be replaced by machines. (Pessi & al, 2017, 105)

It is indeed surprising that employees in Western Europe, in one of the most economically developed areas, are less engaged (10%) than the global average and at the same time, in the US/Canada the engagement is over three times higher (33%). (Gallup, 2017, 5) What makes this even more interesting and paradoxical is that despite the Western European statistics, Finland was rated happiest country in the world in 2019. (World Economic Forum, 2019b) Finland is also famous of its educational system which is considered to be *one of the best in the world*. (World Economic Forum, 2019c)

Coming back to the global average of 67% “not engaged” employees, this group is extremely challenging for leaders as they are difficult to spot. They are the ones not hating their job but still not putting energy and passion into their work.

Companies with majority of not engaged employees cannot very easily accelerate innovations, creativity and productivity either. The opportunity with this group, however, is that it can be easily turned into engaged employees. But on the other hand, they can equally easily become actively disengaged. (Gallup, 2017, 46)

Gallup (2017, 186-187) suggests the reason behind better results on employee engagement (31%) in the US and Canada is the fact that American workplaces are more adept on **giving employees possibilities to excel in their work**, leading to better engaged and retained employees.

The reason why companies should care is that there is a link between higher employee engagement levels and better business outcomes: In businesses with higher engagement stats absenteeism is lower (by 41%) and productivity higher (by 17%). Engaged employees also tend to do more work. Higher level of engagement decreases the employee turnover as much as 59%. (*Gallup qualifies organizations with high-turnover if the percentage is above 40 and the ones below 40% are seen as low-turnover organizations.*) **Higher employee engagement stats are also linked to many success related matters such as better quality, better safety, better customer outcomes (by better customer service)** and even 20% higher sales and 21% higher business units result higher. (Gallup 2017, 37-39) However, the emphasis should be on taking proper actions to concretely improve things to engage employees instead of primarily focusing on measuring the engagement levels. (Gallup, 2017, 42-44)

Highly committed employees have great significance to their company. When the staff is engaged, they are passionate and creative, and also connected to the company's mission. They feel purpose. Whereas employees who are not engaged do not care about their job or, even worse, hate their work and are willing to destroy it. (Gallup, 2019)

Managers are in a key position in between an employee's personal goals and the needs of the organization. The ones succeeding with employee engagement are the ones who have a more holistic view on an employee's work experience as a

whole and are the ones knitting those two goals together – both personal (*for the employee*) and organizational. (Gallup, 2017, 95)

Gallup (2017, 2) suggests that in order to improve declining productivity is to improve employee development instead of trying to increase employee satisfaction. Whereas, Nayar (2010, 150-156) stresses that finding out what employees are passionate about is more important than finding out employee satisfaction or engagement levels. Passion is the factor which makes people take responsibility for change instead of just being satisfied with the current situation.

Following chapter 2.5. shows one example of a company which has been recognized about their efforts on creating engaging workplaces. The link between happy employees (*putting employees first*) will be opened up in chapter 3.5.

2.5 Finnish Company Showing A New Direction

Along with Finland recently getting recognized as happiest country in the world (World Economic Forum, 2019b), it seems that despite the disturbing statistics of poor employee engagement levels in Western Europe (Gallup, 2017, 24) and work related mental health issues revealed by Terveystalo (Iltalehti, 2019) there are good news coming from Finland as well what comes to workplaces.

Vincit, a Finnish origin software company (Finder, 2019b; Vincit, 2019), established 2007 (EIN Newsdesk, 2019; Finder, 2019b) is leading the new direction for companies by creating workplaces “*where people want to work*”.

Their work culture has been awarded multiple times in Finland, in Europe (Vincit.com, 2019) and recently in the US as well. (EIN Newsdesk, 2019) The company supports families in multiple ways: by offering remote work, providing fatherhood packages and coaching for parenting, child care help with sick children etc. (Lasten Maailma, 2019)

Vincit reveals its source of success coming “***from satisfied customers and satisfied employees.***” (Vincit.com, 2019)

3 LEADERSHIP

“The world is changing and therefore leadership must also change”
– ***Matti Alahuhta*** (2018, 16)

3.1 Traditional Leadership – Coercion

Traditional leadership theories are based on coercion and force. (Hrchitects, 2016; Medium, 2018) This is also called control-and-command leadership style which uses tactics such as discipline, punishment, threats and micromanagement in order to motivate or to manage the company as a whole rather than leading or empowering people. The basis of this leadership style is in the industrial revolution. (Forbes, 2016; Medium, 2018, Wall Street Journal. 2010)

This kind of hammering management style does not inspire people to be innovative which is the key for companies in this era to stay in business. (Forbes, 2016) This style does neither acknowledge emotions and the importance of engaging employees. It has rather taught us to leave them and our internal selves outside the door. (Hrchitects, 2016)

Industrial revolution e.g. industrial age typically means the era in the late 1800 and beginning of 1900 when machinery replaced hand tools and mass production and manufactured goods took over, starting from Great Britain and followed by other countries. (Interesting Engineering, 2018) This era also brought forward new technologies and workstyles and machines replaced many skilled workers. (World Economic Forum, 2018)

In greater detail, the actual industrial revolution is in reality the second one. The first one was actually started already in the 1700s with the rise of the steam engine mechanizing the production and urbanizing people rapidly. The second one, which is commonly known as the only or main industrial revolution, was between 1800s and 1900. The third industrial revolution started in the 1950s and it was due to the birth of computers and digital technology. This revolution lead into automation of manufacturing and the disruption of industries such as

banking, energy and communications. (Salesforce, 2018) The figure 3 below is about those four industrial revolutions.

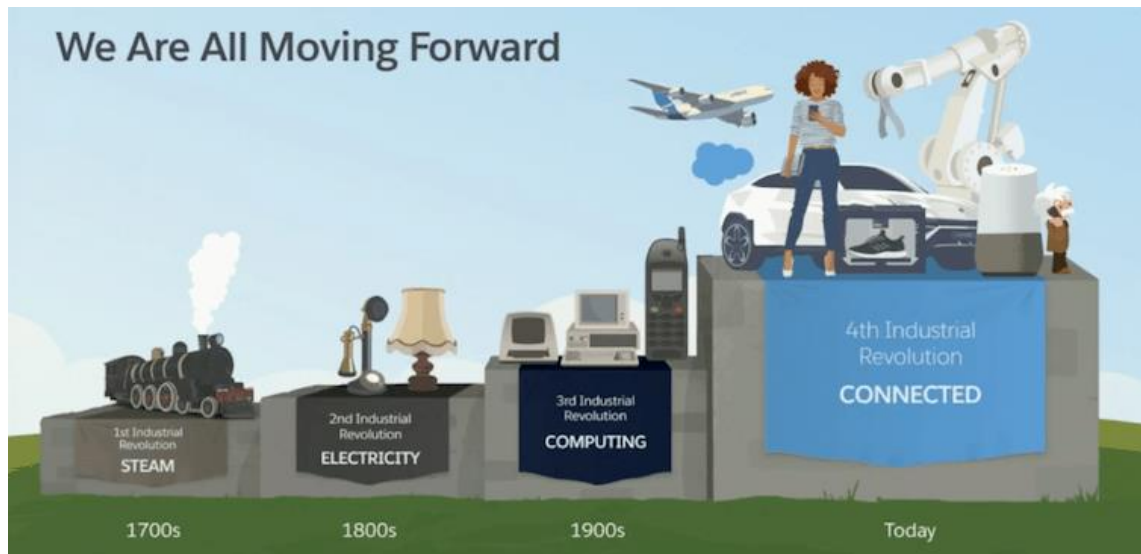


FIGURE 3. Industrial revolutions (Salesforce, 2018)

As already mentioned before, we currently are in the midst of the fourth industrial revolution which is combining physical, digital and biological worlds. (Salesforce, 2018; World Economic Forum, 2019a) Even though this (4IR) fourth industrial revolution seems to be replacing the human labor it is also creating new opportunities and reinventing workplaces by giving workers more flexibility when and where to do their work. (World Economic Forum, 2018)

3.2 The Importance of Female CEOs and Diversity

Even though the possibility to utilize machines and robots for highly analytical tasks increases, there is still need for human talent. Especially the lack of IT skills is preventing the full speed of digital transformation and there is a need for future candidates in science, math and engineering. The ICT (*Information and communication technology*) sector is heavily men-dominated and only 24% of the workforce is female – and even though the goal is to hire the most competent candidates, the importance of diversity and different strengths between men and women should not be forgotten. (World Economic Forum, 2018)

As the leadership is evolving and changing overall, also the perceptions of leadership are transforming. Tadashi Yanai, the 70-year-old billionaire and founder of Japan's retail empire Uniqlo has stated that **“the job of CEO is more suitable for a woman”** due that **“women are persevering, detail-oriented and have an aesthetic sense”**. (Forbes, 2019c)

Female-led companies seem to have stronger marketing teams, wider publicity, stronger event planning and have greater online presence. Due to women's superior situational emotional intelligence (EI) they tend to yield better performance in tasks, and in addition, companies which have more women in leading positions are overall more collaborative and outperform organizations which are not led by women. (Business.com, 2015)

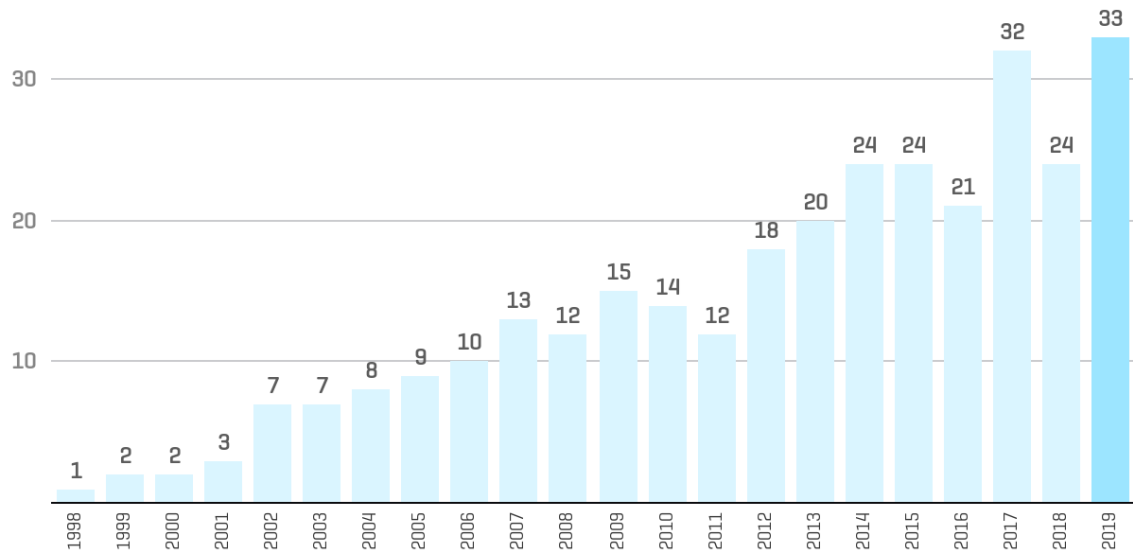
Emotional intelligence can be utilized as a secret weapon amongst women leaders who utilize more of their *naturally encouraged* softer skills. A study shows that especially in situations where influencing is required over direct authority, women seem to show higher levels of emotional intelligence. Their emotional intelligence skills are also more common among executive women than men. That ability has evolved by overcoming obstacles throughout their career - however many women do not utilize this advantage and are instead *trying to be like men*. (Forbes, 2016b)

Companies in turbulent situations should consider hiring a woman as CEO due to the fact that women tend to be more intuitive, understanding and sympathetic. They may be better to steer the personnel and situations through demanding times whereas men tend to lack those characteristics. (Business.com, 2015)

In Fortune 500 companies, there are only 5% of female CEOs. At the same time the number of women in the workforce is 45%. There has been 18% better revenue by the companies led by females instead of men. (Business.com, 2015) In the list of Fortune 500 companies, only 33 were led by female CEOs (FCEO) meaning only 6,6%. During the past years it has been less than 5%. 20 years ago, the number of female CEOs in Fortune 500 companies was 1 or 2. This surely has been increasing from that but still the amount is very little. However, 25,5% of the board members are female, so 1 out of 4. There is a linkage between

female seats in boards and female CEOs. When there are women in board groups, also female CEOs are more likely to be appointed. (Fortune, 2019) The figure 4 below shows the number of female CEOs in the Fortune 500.

Number of Female CEOs in the Fortune 500



As of June 1, 2019; includes Bed Bath & Beyond's interim CEO

SOURCE: Fortune

FORTUNE

FIGURE 4. Number of Female CEOs in the Fortune 500 (Fortune, 2019)

There are new studies suggesting that it is good for businesses to appoint women for positions of CEO and CFO. Companies with female CEOs and/or CFOs were perceived as less risky by investors and were seen more profitable with a positive impact also on their stock prices. The reason for this better performance is assumed to be caused by the higher standards that are put on women. The male-dominant boards seem to hire men even though the appointed ones are not necessarily as qualified, and when they do hire women, they tend to outperform the male candidates. (CNN, 2019b)

Despite the positive trend with more women in upper echelons, the executive seats are still more of a male playground. The boards also seem to be more critical to women in crisis situations, kicking the women out faster than their male counterparts if the results are not pleasant or enough efficient. (Business.com, 2015) The other interesting point of view can be seen in a trend of companies hiring more women CEOs during a time of crisis. There are also presumptions

that *women are hired to clean up the mess men have caused, because men do not want to* (MarketWatch, 2019) or they are hired as scapegoats. (Business, 2015) Go and tell.

In the US, there has been an increase of female CEOs within the last decade from representing 12% in 2010 to 22% in the first half of 2019. The paradigm here is that almost 40% of MBA graduates is female. (MarketWatch, 2019)

When organizations are throughout inclusive with diversity in every level of their decision making, the percentage of making better business decisions could increase up to 87%. (Forbes, 2017b) Gender and ethnic diversity improves performance overall by bringing in more creativity and means for innovation. (Forbes, 2017b; World Economic Forum, 2018) Diversity does not only mean having both genders and multiple races represented. It means the whole scale of people who can look at things from different angles: young and old, from different cultures and backgrounds, and people with different educational backgrounds. (Alahuhta, 2018, 140)

3.3 Leadership through the Eyes of Military and in Corporate World

Alexander the Great, who was born 356 in Macedon, is considered as being the greatest leader of all time. He was someone who was able to defeat vastly superior forces. (Military History, 2010)

According to retired United States Air Forces Colonel and command pilot Lee Ellis (Leading with Honor, 2019), the leadership similarities in military and corporate world stem from the fact that in both problems have to be solved and the mission accomplished by influencing their people. (Leading with Honor, 2013)

Leaders in military-like hierarchical structures used to focus on short-term results instead of long-term growth, and those structures were utilized in order to oversee rules and processes. (Wall Street Journal, 2010)

Göran Lindgren has stated ***“Be it war or peace, only people can be led.”*** You cannot lead results, economy, quality or anything else – people are the only ones who affect the result no matter what the meter or indicator is. Lindgren states that it is impossible for the leader to succeed without skilled and motivated subordinates. (Manninen, 2001, 22-23)

In the late 2000s, the importance of talent in the organization and its development was realized. Fred Hassan, the CEO of Schering-Plough stresses the importance of CEOs being responsible for developing talent, regardless of the size of the company, through coaching and fostering loyalty and commitment as well as being good role models themselves. (Brown, P, Kingsley, J. & Paterson, S., 2015, 171)

“A competent leader can get efficient service from poor troops, while on the contrary an incapable leader can demoralize the best of troops.” John J. Pershing. (Maury, M., Meretniemi, T., Jaana Tuomila, J, 2015, 108)

3.4 Leadership and Communication in Large Corporations

The former CEO of world known mobile phone manufacturer Nokia Corporation, Mr. Jorma Ollila (2013, 161), explains about communication playing a key role in leading teams - first with 25 employees, then 2000, and then (*six years later*) he was a supervisor of 50 000 people. When there is such a large number of people to be led, the leader must ensure that the message will be delivered to the whole organization – there is no opportunity to talk with everyone personally. Therefore, the communication needs to be clear and planned.

According to Ollila (2013, 161) the most important mission of the CEO is communication, communication and communication. The second most important task is human resources. Ollila emphasizes that the CEO is the highest HR Manager in the company. Fred Hassan has similar views as Ollila, stating that ***“The CEO has to see himself as the chief developer of talent, no matter how large the company.”*** (Harvard Business Review, 2003)

Alahuhta (2018, 129-130) and Ollila (2013, 161) have similar views about the importance of communicating the direction and goals clearly to the personnel. It is not enough that just the leader knows. Having the clear direction empowers the personnel and helps them work towards the same goal even in difficult times as they do not need to go and check the instructions from management all the time.

3.5 Employees First – Customers Second

Many times, leaders are seen as the top of a pyramid and someone looking their subordinates from above. However, according to Alahuhta (2018, 204) and Trig (2018) the leader is the servant of his organization and his place is at the bottom, supporting everyone else. This can also be called an inverted pyramid. (CIO, 2016; Trig, 2018)

The purpose of flipping the leadership pyramid is to improve the communication throughout an organization and to create more flexibility and responsiveness as well as putting more focus on employees whose interactions with customers define the success. Therefore, this shifts the importance from executive leadership to the employees. (CIO, 2016)

The immense power of putting people (*employees*) first – even before profits - is also part of so-called servant leadership which is utilized by many world-known leaders. Servant-leadership is related to love-leadership and seen as *the only sustainable model for future work*. (Inc.com, 2017)

The same emphasis has been seen in Southwest Airlines where their (*late*) CEO Herb Kelleher used to state that **“if employees are treated right, they treat the outside world right”** and by doing that customers will use their products again which in turn also benefits their shareholders. (Business Insider, 2105; Trig, 2018) This statement also flips the pyramid upside down by putting much more weight on the employees than to the shareholders.

Looking back in history, Alexander the Great, one of the most famous warriors, was a leader who led by example and who was leading from the front. He faced the circumstances as his troops. If they felt hunger, he felt it as well. So, he experienced the same struggles as his troops. He did not lead remotely – commanding from the distance – was there with his troops. He never took advantage of his position by putting his own needs before of the others. (Insead Knowledge, 2014)

Many successful business owners and leaders define the key component of their company success as putting employees first (*caring of them*). Mr. Willard Marriott, the founder of one of the world's most successful hotel chains, Marriott, always highlighted the importance of taking care of his employees. He said that ***"If you take care of them, they'll take care of your customers and the customers will keep coming back again and again."*** (Marriott, 2008) This is a good point to mention that to care and to adore are synonyms for love. (Macmillan Dictionary, 2019)

Despite the commonly known rule how ***"Customer is the King"***, Alahuhta (2018, 153) puts the emphasis on employee well-being at the heart of running a business and on equal level with customer well-being by stating that ***"if the staff is not doing well, the clients are not doing well either"***. He also states that employee well-being is just as important as what they accomplish. And that, overall, when people are doing good it leads to good results. (Alahuhta, 2018, 20)

The founder of Virgin Airlines, Sir. Richard Branson (Inc.com, 2014) goes even further and states that Virgin **does not put customers first** contrary to the common slogan of many companies during multiple decades. He states that ***"Happy employees equal happy customers"*** adding that as it has worked so well with them, he is surprised that other companies have not adapted their (*employee-centric*) management strategy.

Herb Kelleher has similar views and he also suggests to ***"treat your employees like customers"***. (Forbes, 2019)

4 CULTURE

4.1 Concept of Culture

“Culture is a normative instrument which bolsters company’s identity as one organization. Therefore, it is very likely that without culture, a company would lack values, direction and purpose. Is there one right culture for every organization? The answer is probably no.” (Kazi, 2009, 109)

According to Joshua Rothman (New Yorker, 2014) ***“Culture is a confusing word”***. When talking about company culture it is about its particular way of working.

The CEO of Vincit California software company, Mr. Ville Houttu explains that it is a tremendous honor that their unique company culture has been recognized by Tech in Motion with “Best Tech Work Culture” award, and even though the company has put a lot of effort to create a workplace where people want to work that ***“companies don’t create culture, people do.”*** (EIN Newsdesk, 2019)

Culture identifies as specific features of a particular group where group identity is enhanced or fueled by specific social behaving models, ranging from clothing to social habits. It is a collective and shared learned phenomenon consisting of unwritten rules of what is right or wrong. (Live Science, 2017)

Anyone witnessed more than one company or organizational culture can understand that. In some work cultures knowledge is power, and in order not to lose it, information is not shared. However, culture can also be such as witnessed with my current employer (DYNASET) that everyone helps others. Usually, there will not be answers of *“I don’t know”* or *“Not my business”* but if the person does not know, he or she is led to someone who the respondent thinks could help. Therefore, a company or an organization overall, can either make it or break it. Many times, the tone for culture is set by the company and its leadership but it is not to be forgotten the role employees play.

Hofstede (2010, 6-7) sees human nature being as mental software which all possess with the ability to feel emotions such as fear, anger, love and joy. However, culture determinates how humans will express those feelings.

In Maslow's five level hierarchy of needs, the need of love and belongingness is on third level together with affiliating (*being part of a group such as family, friends or work*). These interpersonal relationships motivate behavior after the primary needs – such as *physiological needs of food, water, warm and rest* – have been covered along with secondary needs of safety and security, law and order, and stability & freedom. The need for love and belongingness is followed by the need of esteem such as dignity and reputation through others, and the need for respect or reputation precedes the building of self-esteem especially for children and youth. The fifth level in the hierarchy of needs is to seek personal growth in **order** ***“to become everything one is capable of becoming”***. (Simply Psychology, 2018) This, at work culture, is related with the need for finding own purpose and being able to be the best version of oneself.

A sense of belongingness increased with remembering and noticing employees' interests and knowing their family members' names as well. In addition, it will also improve just by smiling and calling people by name. (Harvard Business Review, 2016) Simply put, treating them as someone who are interested about and who you care about. One way of caring about coworkers in reality, is really the understanding to help either colleagues or subordinates when they need help. The way mentioned in that real-life example on different company cultures earlier in this chapter.

4.2 Corporate Culture (Fruits of Healthy Corporate Culture)

“Every organization has a culture. The organizational culture, whether weak or strong, has a powerful influence throughout an organization; it affects practically everything – from who gets promoted and what decisions are made, to how employees dress and what sports they play”. (Kazi, 2009, 98)

Healthy and strong corporate culture is a vital key of a successful company. IN such a culture, employees enjoy their work and they are able to meet given goals and to be innovative. (Alahuhta, 2018, 143) The differences between weak and strong companies come up especially in difficult times when it can be seen that companies with healthy company culture and strong foundation thrive. (Alahuhta, 2018, 111)

“Good work community allows diversity, errors, little frictions and occasional irritation and poor leadership as long as it is not intentional”. (Maury & al, 2015, 265) The quality of organizational culture defines how creative or productive an organization is and that culture ***“can lift people or let them down”.*** (Liberationist, 2019) It is possible to strengthen the sense of cohesion (*fellowship*), for example, by a common song or motto linked with the team or organization. (Harvard Business Review, 2016)

According to Manby (2012, 34) ***“Agape love is leadership principle that holds leaders accountable and helps many organizations to become healthier and more enthusiastic.”***

4.3 Egalitarian Corporate Culture and Peer-to-Peer Management

Progressive or modern leadership in egalitarian structures provides and requires dispersed leadership or peer-to-peer management regardless of position. (BaseN, 2009; Medium, 2018) This means for everyone having to manage their peers, bosses and subordinates. According to Hurri (BaseN, 2009) this reciprocal accountability is needed in order to utilize the opportunities that globalization has created – and even though managing a boss would seem inappropriate – taking on these models of modern organization instead of clinging to the old ways will lead to success.

In traditional organizational models which are based on hierarchies, the executives have power and huge advantages over others. They are rewarded as much as possible whereas the others in the lower levels get as little as possible.

The modern e.g. egalitarian structure empowers everyone throughout the organization and leadership is dispersed equally. (Medium, 2018)

Finland is known as an egalitarian society (Kazi, 2009, 125; Medium, 2018b) and typical organizational culture in the country and in the Nordics in general is egalitarian and low in power distance enabling leaders to an open communication. (Kazi, 2009, 103)

In contra, in Asian countries the power distance is larger (*in-egalitarianism*) (Kazi, 2009, 125; The Articulate CEO, 2011). In in-egalitarian countries employees obey the authority and have the view of not being equal with others. This forces the leaders to be the ones making decisions and solving problems rather than employees being empowered to find solutions by themselves. (The Articulate CEO, 2011).

Egalitarianism in companies provides a way not only to empower people to have authority and take responsibility but to also provide an organizational culture where everyone can feel equal and valued. No-one is above others.

4.4 Tools to Create a More Engaging & Thriving Culture

“Creating of culture of engagement requires an organization to take a close look at how critical engagement elements align with their performance development and human capital strategies.” (Gallup, 2017, 49)

According to Gallup (2017, 47), engagement starts in highly engaged organizations from the top. Their leaders understand the importance of highly committed employees and remove barriers which are preventing from doing great work on a daily basis in order to improve everyone's performance.

The employees must be set for success by understanding what is expected of them, having the tools and environment which support achieving their goals, to be in the right role and feeling they have their manager's back. To remain highly

engaged and performing, the employees need coaching and conversations to support them staying on track. (Gallup, 2017, 48)

In coaching everything is built on the strengths of a person and it recognizes the vast potential of human capability. The core idea of coaching is that a person is creative, resourceful and whole without the need to fix (*him or her*). (Ojansivu, 2010, 6-7)

Both Gallup (2018) and Alahuhta (2018, 157) have common view about the importance of having every person in the most suitable job possible for them. Alahuhta especially speaks about the good vibe which is vital for the organization in order to achieve growth and customer satisfaction.

The leader's goal is to build relationships with safety, security and trust - leading the followers without causing anxiety, fear and coercion - when this succeeds, the performance increases tremendously. The ability to channel emotions is a key component of engagement which will be followed by success. There are evidences showing that decreasing anxiety, fear and coercion leads to improved performance as trust and co-operation with others take more space. (Hrchitects, 2016)

An empathic environment at work is a key for more committed and less stressed employees as well, also enhancing collaboration and mutual help leading to less likely unethical behaviors. (LinkedIn, 2019b)

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach helps organizations to move from weaknesses-based to strength-based, challenging the traditional problem-solving style where the focus is on trying to find out what is wrong and to fix it, whereas AI approach **seeks what is best or right in an organization** and aims to leverage the positive. (Benedictine University, 2017; Liberationist, 2019) Gallup (2017, 2) emphasizes the same approach and suggest **making every company in the world as strengths-based** instead of the traditional style where weaknesses are attempted to be turned into strengths – this move will change the productivity and growth. Figure 5 next opens up the paradigm shift in appreciative inquiry.

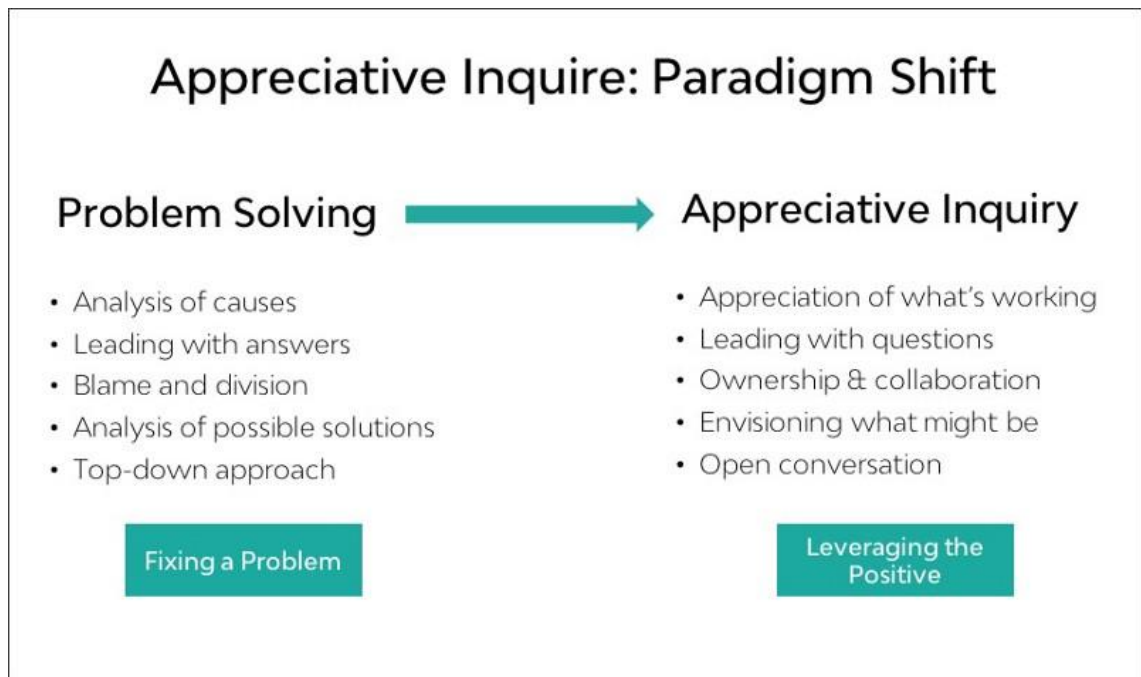


FIGURE 5. Appreciative Inquiry: Paradigm Shift. Liberationist (2019)

Appreciative inquiry model can be utilized as 1:1 leadership coaching but especially it has been used as a tool to improve organizations of all sizes. Many globally well-known companies and organizations recognize and utilize the AI method as a great tool for success such as British Airways (*improvement of customer service*), John Deere (*improvement of cost, quality and cycle time*) to mention few (Benedictine University, 2017) and the United States Navy (*leadership development*). (Benedictine University, 2017; The United States Navy, 2001).

Appreciative inquiry is based on **Appreciation** – *valuing, recognizing the best in people and the world around, affirming past and present strengths, successes and potentials, perceiving things giving life (health, vitality, excellence) to living systems and increasing in value e.g. the economy has appreciated in value. Synonyms: Valuing, Prizing, Esteeming and Honoring. And Inquiry, the act of exploration and discovery, to ask questions; to be open to see new potentials and possibilities. Synonyms: Discovery, Search, Systematic Exploration and Study.* (Research Gate, 2005)

The AI approach was first introduced to public in 1986 in the doctoral dissertation "*Appreciative Inquiry: Toward a Methodology for Understanding and*

Organizational Innovation” by David Cooperrider. (Research Gate, 2005) Cooperrider is a co-creator of AI (*appreciative inquiry*), (David Cooperrider, 2012; Research Gate 2005), the approach which enables positive change and innovation in large and complex systems. Cooperrider is also consultant for various organizations such as the Boeing Corporation, Hannifin Parker and Verizon. (David Cooperrider, 2012)

Manby (2012, 62) shares an example of this kind of approach (*without naming it such*) when he was at one of his lowest points in 2009. When it was not only a bad day but a bad year, and when suddenly one of the owners of the company he worked for (*Herschend Family Entertainment*) showed support and highlighted the good and how that was able to redouble his boost instead of putting him down.

“Studies show that in high performing teams people share positive feedback nearly six times more than in average teams.” Feedback – already as a word – has a negative connotation (*sound*) as it is seen as constructive criticism which is served as a “balanced sandwich” filled with correction and failure

while nearly fully forgotten that feedback should be positive as well. (Medium, 2015) This is because feedback is typically seen as evaluation. When focusing on providing feedback the concentration is on others past (*failed or poor*) performance instead of imagining better future performance for them. Therefore, asking for an advice is more efficient as the tone is set to be positive. (Harvard Business Review, 2019b)

What separates “high performing and enthusiastic” employees from “low performing and miserable” ones, is the fact that for high performing and enthusiastic employees, **“There is someone at work who encourages their development”**. (Gallup, 2017,2)

Mr. Petteri Rautaportas, the Head Economist of The Federation of Finnish Technology Industries says in Kauppalehti Optio (2019, 11) that the most important career doctrine he has learned is **“The importance to try to**

understand how the counter partner thinks and why, even if they both would totally disagree with each other”.

Therefore, it is not just vital to have leaders who encourage their subordinates' development but also to have open mind in order to try to understand how the other person thinks, despite that there would not be understanding in the beginning. Development, overall, happens in co-operation.

5 WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH LEADERSHIP

5.1 Fear-Based Leadership (Distrust)

“People who feel bad often try to make the people around them feel even worse.” Liz Ryan (Forbes, 2015)

Fear-based leadership can be described briefly in three words: **sticks, command and control**. Where carrots and collaboration describe love leadership. (Forbes, 2015b)

Liz Ryan (Forbes, 2015) believes that there is no manager who would say he is leading his team through fear. In addition, those leading with fear have no idea for doing so as no-one around them is telling them the truth. The fear in fear-based leadership is used to control people instead of trusting and inspiring the team or individuals to achieve great things, and those leaders use threats to intimidate employees into submission.

Fear-based management style comes from the manager's own insecurities (*of not feeling whole*) as they do not know who they are behind their titles, letting their own fears to lead their actions. They use their title (*professional identity*) as a source for personal power. ***“They don't have the self-esteem to build anyone else up and make the people who work for them feel strong and capable.”*** (Forbes, 2015)

A loss of a parent or other trauma during youth is surprisingly common with leaders. Having to deal with such trauma has equipped them to be able to live without praise and to be less emotional. (Training Industry, 2018) Perhaps those two things together explain why so often leadership is flawed.

In his book, Juuti (2018, 88-89) opens up how supervisors (*“leadership”*) have two faces. One face is the supervisor acting kind smiling, greeting and asking *“how are you”* - and with their second face they use fear as a leadership tool.

The employees in Kone always answered similarly to the question of their CEO Mr. Alahuhta, about what is the most motivating atmosphere for them. The response was the work community having strong trust between people. Mr. Alahuhta states that oppression and fear do not improve performance but consistency does. (Alahuhta, 2018, 152)

Leading by fear leads to “*short-termism*” where the goal is only a short-term win and the good results are also short-term. (Alahuhta, 2018, 152; Bryant, 2009, 64-65) With luck it is possible for businesses to take off like a rocket, however, in a long term they will implode. (Bryant, 2009, 64-65) Therefore this is not the way to achieve sustainable results.

Bryant (2009, 56-58) talks about fear and how low self-esteem manifests as an arrogance driven by “winner-takes-it-all” competition, and how self-esteem is a key component of combating fear. Bryant also emphasizes how a person who does not like himself cannot like others and who does not love himself cannot show love to others. This holds true for respect as well. He also goes quite far by saying “***if he does not have purpose in his life, he is going to make your life a living hell as well.***”

According to Bryant (2009, 61-62) fear-based leadership tactics are following: *Aggressive language, tone and eye contact, unfairly criticism, blaming without offering reasonable recourse, applying rules inconsistently, stealing credit, making unreasonable demands, issuing threats, insults and accusations, denying accomplishments, excluding others from opportunities, assigning pointless tasks, personalizing problems, breaching confidentiality and spreading rumors.*

A timely example of fear-based leadership was just making headlines in Finland when news outlet MTV Uutiset (*MTV News in English*) got a hold of an internal report of HUS (*Helsinki University Hospital*) which concerned their specializing physicians (*doctors*). The wide attention was received due to the revelations of their dominant fear-based leadership, exploitation of their monopoly position, risking patient safety and atmosphere of fear. (MTV Uutiset, 2019)

Notable here is that HUS is not only the biggest health care provider in Finland but also the second largest employer in the country with 25 000 employees. (HUS, 2019) Another significant fact is that only 36 out of over 1000 specializing physicians (*doctors*) were willing to respond to the study, meaning a 3,6% response rate. (Yle Uutiset, 2019b) Several specialist doctors refused to participate the study and many people were very concerned about whether it was safe for them to respond with complete anonymity. (MTV Uutiset, 2019) Fear seems to be a common nominator not only within the organization but also in participating in studies like this and hence affecting quite far.

Fear-free organizations beat fear-led organizations as within them information flows freely, relationships are based with trust and the energy is not wasted to mere survival. (Brown & al, 2015, 157) However, the fear-based leadership (*command and control*) style still remains common worldwide. (Gallup, 2017, 25)

Dealing with a fear-based manager is a challenge, it is a competition between predator (*manager*) and prey (*employee*). Even job-seekers who show too much self-confidence (*more prey-like person*) are rapidly shown the door. Such managers are afraid of everyone until they discover ways to bully them, and overall, they “*specialize in squashing other people's self-esteem*”, one way or another. (Forbes, 2015) This type of managers clearly are not the ones creating healthy and thriving environment for creativity or innovations.

Why fear can take over in such a dominating way can be understood when having a look to fears in an organization which are triggered by real or perceived threats. Sensing the threat of losing something important at work can be so powerful that it motivates people taking strong actions to avoid it. SCARF model explains what are the things people at work most **fear losing**:

- **Status (or power)** and possibilities of not being promoted / awarded with pay or even losing the job.
- **Certainty**: loosing the ability to be able to predict how things will turn out, including of fearing to make mistakes or not being good enough.
- **Autonomy**: feeling losing a sense of control over events, including the fear of doing a job that is hated or demeaning or working long hours or of doing a tasks with no reward.

- **Relatedness:** *fear of being judged or not being appreciated for the efforts made, dealing with difficult customers or clients and of being subjected to violence or bullying (relates to the sense of safety).*
- **Fairness:** *related to credibility or reputation, including a fear of being wrong or failing, of not being respected, and of not performing well.*

(Brown & al, 2015, 129)

According to Colonel Lee Ellis (Leading with Honor, 2013), people management is the main challenge for companies and finding the balance between mission and people. ***“Leading by fear is the worst kind of leadership because it denies our basic needs for safety and it is very inefficient”***. Ellis sees it as a threat if people are not taken care of and are not shown that they are cared about - as ultimate people will leave hostile workplaces when they have a choice.

“Maybe the oddest thing today is that both supporting and fear-based leading are used mixed together.” (Juuti, 2018, 88)

5.2 Mental and Physical Effects on Fear-Based Leadership

“Threatening words take their toll” meaning that our emotional neural systems (*amygdala specifically*) automatically reacts to threats caused by words and puts our brains on high alert. Even though the negative or fear-associated words such as poverty, illness or death would not have real substance in the moment, they trigger our amygdala as if they were real. (Brown & al, 2015, 48)

If not bad enough, when the words have been said with anger, they actually do damage by interfering with the decision-making center of the brain in the frontal lobe and increase the tendency to act irrationally. (Psychology Today, 2012)

Amygdala Hijack is a term used to explain our functioning. Despite us evolving as humans our brain structures are designed to rapidly respond to a threat. We even react with fight-or-flight to verbal provocations, making us act before we think. This mode temporarily shuts down thinking and analytical reasoning. Even

though the threats of today would not be real, the amygdala hijack can disrupt our operations anyway. (Harvard Business Review, 2017; Very Well Mind, 2019)

The term amygdala hijack was created by world-known psychologist, Mr. Daniel Goleman in 1995 in his book *“Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ”*. (Very Well Mind, 2019)

Good news is that it is possible to interfere with the amygdala’s response to a perceived threat and to train our minds by challenging the thought processes by asking ourselves if the situation is really threatening for our survival. (Harvard Business Review, 2016; Psychology Today, 2012)

Siilasmaa (2018, 179) shares about the principals or *“Golden Rules”* they were creating at Nokia when trying to manage the chaos the company had gotten itself into in 2012. Siilasmaa suggests always to assume that people are acting with good intentions and when someone says something unpleasant – ***instead of tuning into the highest-alert-state and paying back (getting even) have a deep breath and remind that “you have promised yourself to assume that the other person is acting with good intentions”***. The way to react towards others’ actions as Mr. Siilasmaa is teaching has to do with dealing with the *“amygdala hijack”*. (Very Well Mind, 2019) Risto Siilasmaa is current Nokia Chairman of the Board (since 2012) and the former CEO of F-Secure (1998 - 2006). (Nokia, 2019)

In order for humans to be productive and innovative, there has to be a feeling of safety at work instead of feeling to be in danger. Safe environment allows people to relax and wake ***“brain’s higher capacity for social engagement, innovation, creativity, and ambition.”*** During fight-or-flight response the access to the social engagement system of the limbic brain gets lost and so does creativity. Therefore, creating an environment where employees feel safe should be taken very seriously. (Harvard Business Review, 2016)

The study of Google supports this statement. The study about team performance revealed high-performing teams having one trait in common – psychological safety. Within these teams, making mistakes is not punished and people feel safe

enough to take (*reasonable*) risks, to share their ideas and to overall be open without fear of failure or punishment. (Harvard Business Review, 2017; Pessi et al, 2017, 106) This however, requires *mutual trust, empathic sensitivity and compassion*. (Pessi & al, 2017, 106)

Companies should also be aware that the feeling of safety can decrease also just by watching unpleasant interactions between co-workers. When the environment feels safe and there is no fear of being judged and that ideas will be considered, greater diversity of ideas will emerge. Employees will recognize the support from leaders to grow and will mutually reward their leaders “**by the going extra mile**”. (Harvard Business Review, 2016) However, some leaders, unfortunately, take advantage of this by demanding employees to go extra miles again and again without rewarding the extra effort and by taking the hard-work for granted and abusing the goodwill of their subordinates.

The occurrence of “*amygdala hijack*” can be seen in either work or family conflict situations where rational people can get irrational fairly quickly when they feel threatened or, for example, falsely accused. In those moments, all common sense disappears and defense mode takes over. Understanding that there is a possibility to train our minds out of this natural combat mode gives hope for work life situations where people often feel threatened.

According to Bryant (2009, 175) “the most dangerous person alive is a person without hope.”

5.3 Love-Based Leadership (Trust)

At BaseN, the significance of love in leadership is understood and emphasized openly. In their company blog, the CEO, Mr. Pasi Hurri, states that “***The critical success factor in management - and almost at any interactive position in modern work life – is love***”. Hurri puts love in a central position for success and shares his view on how love unlocks tremendous potential within his people. The solid trust that follows gives unprecedented powers in understanding those people (*including their weaknesses and shortcomings*) surpassing all other

motivation methods he can think of. (BaseN, 2011) Tamiko Cuellar, the CEO and Founder of Pursue Your Purpose, LLC has similar views on love being the most important component of any successful business. (Forbes, 2018)

Herb Kelleher, the already passed away founder of Southwest Airlines, has stated that ***“an infusion of love is an essential, but often overlooked ingredient in any business.”*** He is said to have built his entire business on love by stating ***“If you seek long continued success for your business, treat your people as family and Lead with Love.”*** (Leaderonomics, 2018)

What tells about the popularity and success of Mr. Kelleher is that he has been voted as the best CEO in the airline industry, and Fortune Magazine (1994) even insinuated that he might be one of the best CEOs ever. Kelleher's founded Southwest Airlines keep still soaring today as an innovator in its own industry and as a company which does many things differently than others, keeping fares low and being different and more humane. (Partridge, 2015)

There is a difference between leaders and managers. Real leadership is about love – putting the success of others before own needs. This kind of leadership springs from love towards others. When manager primarily loves himself, the main thing is feeding his own ego and the need being to smartest person in the room. Whereas, true leader is able to make others feel as the smartest people in the room instead. (Training Industry, 2018)

Overall, there is some talk about love and leadership here and there but it is still quite untouched ground. However, the two prominent and successful world-known love-based leaders showing the way are John Hope Bryant (Bryant, 2009) and Joel Manby. (Manby, 2012) They are both well-known for leading with love (Bryant, 2009; Inc.com, 2017; Leaderonomics, 2017; Manby, 2012) and have also been listed as one of TOP 20 CEOs in the World with their unique approach. (Inc, 2017)

John Hope Bryant is a tremendously rewarded American entrepreneur. He is a founder and the CEO of Operation HOPE, Inc. and a builder of over 40 other organizations and companies, and the author of multiple books (including **Love**

Leadership, 2009). He is also a philanthropist and a well-known thought leader on financial inclusion, dignity and economic empowerment. He has served as an advisor for the last three sitting US presidents (*from both political parties*) and his work has been recognized by past five U.S. presidents. (John Hope Bryant, 2019)

Joel Manby came into public knowledge through reality TV show Undercover Boss (IMDb, 2010; Manby, 2012). That specific episode was viewed by more than 18 million people and making it the second most popular show on any network right after The American Idol. (Manby, 2012, 11) His leadership style got many people who saw the episode so excited that they wanted to apply at his company or to let him (*Manby*) know that they wished their own workplaces would be **“More respectful, co-operative, joyful”** and **“more loving”**. (Manby, 2012, 11-12) During the show, Manby was working as President and CEO for Herschend Family Entertainment (HFE). (Manby, 2012, 9)

Manby is also a MBA graduate from Harvard Business School and the former CEO of Saab Automobile USA. (Harvard Business School, 2010; Manby, 2012, 17-18) Manby and his team were able to turn tables from the point of losing money to the second-best year in the history of Saab North America. (Manby, 2012, 18)

Bryant (2009, 84-85) stresses how love really brings profit, too, but when others are treated as he would like to be treated himself, this naturally turns into people wanting to do more business with him. He also emphasizes how **“long-term relationships based on genuine caring are a financial engine that drives love leadership”**.

According to Kevin Cashman, many of the leaders are hesitant using the “L” word - Love and rather use the “C” word - Care or the “A” - word Appreciate. (Forbes, 2012) However, Mr. Hurri speaks about the matter with its real name. (BaseN, 2011)

Bryant (2009, 78-79) talks about love-based prosperity which is about caring for others. He sees money as a by-product of love leadership and a tangible confirmation of actually doing good work. The world-known game-changers –

now billionaires such as Bill Gates or Richard Branson – never thought about money in the beginning but were rather idealists with a passion to improve the world. According to Bryant (2009, 84) **“Key to love leadership is long term orientation toward caring for others.”**

In 2007 Bryant (2009, 5-9) created the first crude diagram of love leadership while being in Dalian (*China*) in a Forum of Young Global Leaders which is sponsored by World Economic Forum. Love leadership is the opposite to fear-based leadership:

Love	Fear
Inspiration	Coercion
We	Me
Empowerment	Repression
Inclusion	Exclusion
Forgiveness	Anger
Spirituality	Non-belief
Ethical questioning	Cynicism
Accountability	Irresponsibility
Compassion	Coldness
Serving	Self-serving
Lifting with love	Failing with fear
Empathy	Sympathy

Billionaire philanthropist Melinda Gates says empathy is an extension of love stating that **“Love is the most powerful and underused force for change in the world”** and has noticed it is missing in political discussion or debates. (Business Insider, 2019)

Both Manby (2012,21) and (Melinda) Gates (2019, 234) tell about the importance of a workplace being compatible with family. Manby also stresses that people want to be the same person in both – with family and at work.

Genuine love for staff does not immolate business goals but is an attitude which allows being imperfectly human and understanding that people have private lives

with problems (*health, financial, marital*) that at times affect work. When those situations are not gently dealt, they can lead to more stress and have negative affect on performance. (Forbes, 2018)

Love and leadership combined may sound like a nice “Kumbaya” gathering around the firepit. However, leading with love at its core includes boundaries and is about getting the best out of the people to make them perform better than they even imagined possible. (Bryant, 2009, xii; Forbes, 2018) **“There is no business without people, so when people thrive, the business thrives.”** (Forbes, 2018)

Leadership does not exist without trust and in order to create trust between leader and follower, the leader must set the right atmosphere by showing an example of being reliable and empathetic. A leader showing trust to his employees will be exposed to the actions that follow trust and it has to assure that their rights will not be harmed. Trust is essential in today’s instable and unpredictable world in order to empower employees to take initiative and to share their ideas and views without feeling like taking a risk. The atmosphere of trust is a key to make employees feel secure and confident. (Management Study Guide, 2019)

According to Mr. Martin Luther King Jr in 1967 (Manby, 2012, 153) **“Power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic.”**

Quite often leaders do not realize how much power they have, especially in terms of being able to negative impact someone else’s life. When a leader has authority to somehow punish the subordinate or to terminate their work contract, the subordinates start to calculate their actions: *If I say this or do this, will I lose my job?* Pondering are they allowed to really express opinions or will their actions lead into problems?

5.4 Are Company's Only Asset – People – Feeling Valued?

“Most people don’t leave because of poor performance; they leave because they don’t feel valued”. – Joel Manby (2012, 118)

There are more and more statements of people (*human capital*) being a company's only or best asset. (Manninen, 2001, 258-260; Quartz, 2015; Talouselämä, 2015)

Matti Alahuhta (Talouselämä, 2015) and Risto Siilasmaa (Manninen, 2001, 258-260) both emphasize that ***“People are the company's only asset”***. Siilasmaa says that leaders must care about people. He regards it as very unfortunate if leaders hide behind their authority because leadership is about caring not just commanding, also pointing out how in army-like organizations commandments must be obeyed without questioning during the crisis. However, he also believes that when the people trust their leader, it is easier for them to obey the commands. (Manninen, 2001, 258-269)

In English terms HR and HRM support that ideology as being Human Resources and Human Resource Management, whereas in Finnish the term used Henkilöstöhallinto directly translates into “Personnel” and “Management” or ***“Control”***. (Google, 2019) Already there the aspect of **human resource** is missing. Therefore, we can see that languages can either diminish or enhance the meaning of terms.

Now, if happy employees are the asset of the company, then what are the keys to make them happy and thrive? According to Branson (Inc.com, 2014) and Gallup (2018, 48) one of the keys is to ensure that they have tools to do their job right.

Both Alahuhta (2018, 18) and Branson (Inc.com, 2014) stress that straight contacts with their employees is a source of getting the feedback how they feel being taken care of. In order to assure his employees are well taken care of;

Branson goes around the cabin during the flights (*Virgin Airlines*) talking directly with his staff and collecting feedback. (Inc.com, 2014)

Real relationships require time and action. Effort being put into relationships where people like and trust each other leads to a desire to do business with each other. In contrast, where people do not like or trust each other, building long-term relationships is close to impossible. (Bryant, 2009, 85)

Many successful leaders emphasize how leaders should genuinely care about their people – every person in the company. (Alahuhta, 2018, 41, 154; Benedictine University, 2014). And in addition, when genuinely caring about them – they will be easier to lead. (Maury & al, 2015, 101)

Employees need to have a sense of purpose in order to thrive and be engaged. The motivating purpose is not about reaching the next target of \$ 10 million but rather finding the bigger purpose for why we do what we do. (Forbes, 2017) However, companies can also show caring about their employees by sharing ownership through employee business stock ownership plans (*ESOPs*) and assuring all stakeholder groups are represented in the company governance. (Harvard Business Review, 2019a) This is a very tangible way to express caring.

According to Harvard Business Review (2019a), the ratio between the salaries of CEO and median worker is in excess of 200:1. Therefore the critical first step for companies is to narrow this gap by curbing executives' pay or increasing average salaries or both. This has been one of the results from escalating capitalism which has caused the gap in pay between employees and executives.

5.5 How to Foster Love Leadership (Fear-Free)

“It takes the power of love to banish fear” and in love leadership love is put into action and it is the source for nourishing long-term business relationships which are built on caring and doing good. (Bryant, 2009, 73)

According to Nina Rinne, shame breeds fear. When people are afraid of showing their vulnerabilities (*insecurities*) it creates adulation which makes them covering their back, avoiding responsibility, trying to find culprit, compare with and diminish others, and to emphasize their own excellence. She also believes that when unpleasant emotions are pushed away, they actually tighten the grip and “***when shame and fear are dulled and suppressed so will joy and love be as well numb.***” Rinne shares her past experience of being CEO and how her own fear was expressed as not acceptable behavior when the challenges and load had been beyond her skills. (Aamulehti, 2019b)

Sauer (2009, 171-172) emphasizes the importance of extensive emotional repertoire for both individual and shared leadership structures.

Emotions at the workplace can be turned into emotional intelligence when wisely managed as they are signs of employees working with meaningful things. The ability to react to emotions can save the day by detecting unhappiness (*of a colleague or client*) very quickly and take corrective steps. Banning emotions at the workplace is “*Orwellian*” – “*destructive to the welfare of free and open society*”. (Leaderonomics, 2013)

It is important for the leader to be aware of his impact on creating a work environment where people can thrive. To be able to do so, the leader must be able to manage his or her own emotions (*anger, fear, sadness, hate*) during crisis situations to not pass them on to others. Fear-free and love-lead leadership starts from the leader as he or she is to set the tone.

“How you make others feel about themselves says a lot about you”.

(Partridge, 2015, 63)

Igniting Love-Based Leadership and to Show Love

The theory section of this thesis ends with a few practical tips on how to ignite love-based leadership in the organizations and how to show love:

The first action is for a leader to ask himself:

- *When did I do something nice for someone at work and thanked or recognized someone for a particular effort for the company?*
- *Have I forgotten to thank people for doing something nice or helpful?*
- *Who has gone the extra mile often and I have taken for granted?*
- *What are things I could do regularly to add love to my workplace?*
- *What are the actions I can take to truly love our customers?*
- *What can I do to bring fun and joy to the workplace?*

(Leaderonomics, 2018)

And continue with the ideas of Tamiko Cuellar on Forbes (2018) about how a leader can show love at work:

- *Show appreciation both private and publicly and encourage when seeing someone is struggling.*
- *Be flexible when needed but have firm expectations and boundaries.*
- *Listen and keep lines of communication open (safe space for communication allows innovations to flourish).*
- *Be less critical and offer help for others to succeed – rather than letting people know how they failed.*
- *Offer support to your people and assist to manage their workload in stressful situations.*
- *Care genuinely about your people and ask how they are doing even on good seeming times. (Notice that it can be distinct when someone is not being genuine).*

These few examples and ideas are the keys to more loving, caring and healthy and thriving work environments for the good and bad times.

***“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only Light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only Love can do that.” –Martin Luther King, Jr.
(Medium, 2019)***

6 RESULTS – Case: BaseN

This second part of the thesis applies the theory in practice by examining leadership in commissioning company BaseN. The practical study, however, is not intended to be compared with the theoretical part itself but rather seen as its own study inspired by the theory between chapters 2 and 5.

The research was conducted by an online survey for the BaseN personnel between October 3rd – 18th 2019, leaving the respondents a two-week time slot to respond.

6.1 Selection of Research Questions and the Aim

Selecting the questions for the online survey was multi-phase process between the author and the commissioning company starting from the actual ideation of the thesis – in the beginning of 2018 – until the end of September 2019 when the actual survey with questions was formed.

The questions were chosen by utilizing already existing questions and data from previous research such as State of the Global Workplace by Gallup (2017). Their study examines the state of the global workplace whereas this study has a look on the state of a specific company. Also, the most prominent love-leadership gurus such as Bryant (2009) and Manby (2012) were inspiring the direction of the survey based on the needs of the commissioning company BaseN.

The online survey included both qualitative and quantitative questions along with open-end questions where the respondents were able to share their thoughts more widely and explain their answers.

The purpose of the research was to find out the dominant leadership style at BaseN, whether it is based more on fear or love and how engaged and valued employees are feeling.

6.2 Response Rates

Response rate for this research was 60%. 12/20 employees responded. The survey did not involve the CEO to make sure that all respondents had a supervisor (*leader*) as part of the questions were aiming at examining the current leadership.

According to Survey Gizmo (2015), internal surveys typically reach a response rate between 30-40% response rate which is typically half of the response rate that external surveys get responses. However, in internal surveys in companies with less than 50 employees the target should be between 80-90% (Survey Gizmo, 2015; Culture Amp, 2019) which would equal 4 out of 5 respondents.

One would think that reaching 100% would be a perfect result but according to Culture Amp (2019), such rates are many times linked with coercion and sometimes associated with poorer quality data, leaving many questions not answered at all.

6.3 Background Information

66,7% of the respondents were male, 25% were female, and 8,3% did not want to specify.

Two major represented age groups were age groups 30 to 40 and 50 and up, both with 33,3%. The next largest age group was 40 to 50 years old with 16,7%. Then 20 to 30 years old people with 8,3% and the group which did not want to specify their age also resulted in 8,3%.

The respondents' position equally comprised of employees and managers with both 50%.

Employed with Current Work (years)

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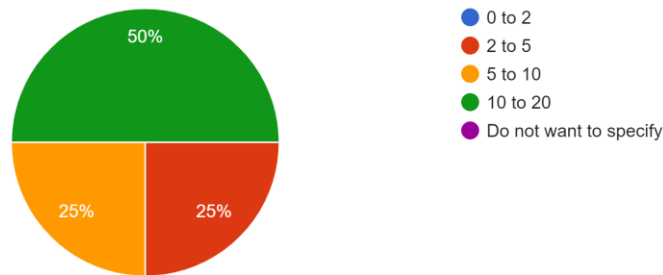


FIGURE Q1. Employed with current work distributed by years divided into groups.

The figure above shows the distribution of employment by the years. Most of the respondents (50%) have been employed with the current work between 10 to 20 years. The remaining 50% consisted of respondents who had been working with the company either 2 to 5 years (25%) or 5 to 10 years (25%). There were no answers from the respondents who had been employed between 0 to 2 years.

6.4 Feelings About Current Work

Do you feel engaged, not engaged or actively disengaged with your employer?

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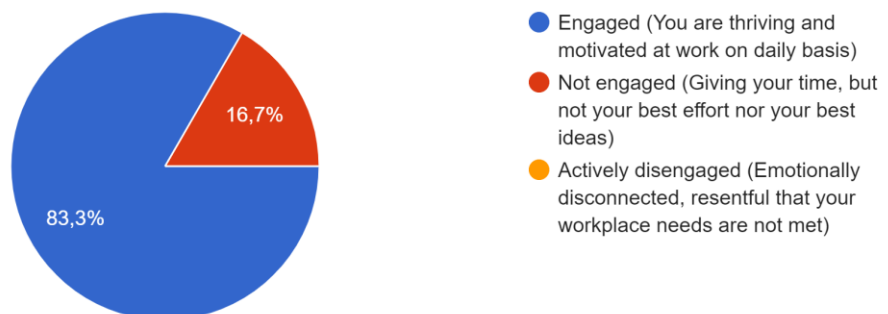


FIGURE Q2. Employee engagement stats

Most of the respondents with 83,3% (10/12) answered feeling engaged with their work (*thriving and motivated at work on daily basis*). 16,7% (2/12) felt not

engaged, meaning they give their time but not their best effort nor their best ideas. No-one responded to be actively disengaged, as the figure above shows.

The explanatory answers behind being engaged were following: working on interesting projects, the company having a good offering the employees are excited about, and last but not least the company itself and the team they work in. In addition, respondents felt that they have good opportunities and feel that they can impact the company and its direction.

The main reasons behind what makes people disengaged with a company were the following: Non-supportive coworkers and/or managers, boredom at work, feeling that feedback is not considered and taken into action, too much pressure coming from managers, unkept promises about career and salary advancements, unequal treatment or not being able to utilize their personal expertise.

6.5 Current Leadership Style

Love (*carrots, collaboration and empowerment*) is seen as dominant leadership style currently at the company with 75% (9/12) and leading with fear (*sticks, command and control*) only with 25% (3/12).

Choose which one describes better the current leadership at the company you work for:

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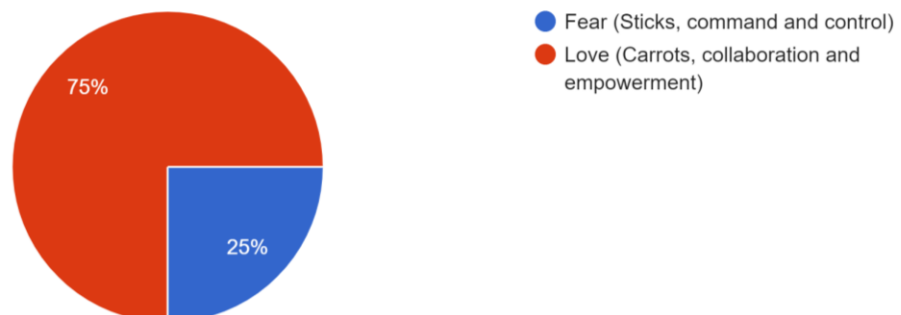



FIGURE Q3. Distribution of Fear and Love describing current leadership

Similar percentages were given to questions of **empowerment 75% (9/12)** over repression (*suppression, oppression, prevention*) 25% (3/12), **accountability 75% (9/12)** over irresponsibility 25% (3/12), and **compassion 75% (9/12)** over coldness 25% (3/12).

The distribution between with **inspiration was 58,3% (7/12)** and coercion (forcing) was 41,7% (5/12). Being a little bit more tilted on the side of inspiration.

Inclusion was regarded as the more dominant leadership style with 66,7% (8/12) over exclusion with 33,3% (4/12).

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your work-life balance? 

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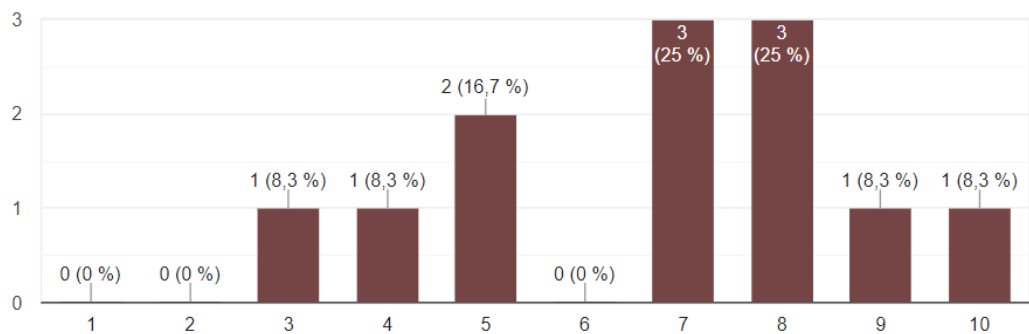


FIGURE Q4. Ratings on work-life balance (1 = Poor, 10 = Excellent)

Work-Life balance showed a quite large division between the respondents. The most ratings were 7 and 8 with both 25% (*with 3 respondents each, 6 combined together*), followed by 5 with 16,7% (*with 2 respondents*). The last 4 respondents rated their work-life balance with 10, 9, 4 and 3 – each making up 8,3% of the whole group. No-one responded 1 or 2, which were the poorest options on the scale.

Explanatory comments for the chosen answers were given. Respondents outlined how their direct managers encourage a better work-life balance, how they get to manage their own time, that there is enough freedom to set their own success. Some answers stated that leadership varies depending on the person – some leaders give more freedom (*which can be both good and bad*) while

others are more prone to cause unnecessary feelings of pressure, stress and work overload. Overall people feel well-balanced. Lower work-life balance scores were partially explained by sometimes generally more hectic times at work.

The distribution between feeling valued was 75% and not valued 25%. The respondents' comments how being valued is visible to them included:

Creating revenue, having impact on company direction, influencing, knowing that coworkers enjoy working with them, manager's feedback and him/her trying to keep promises, respect by coworkers and trust.

To the question *what would make them feel even more valued the*

explanatory responses were: Better acknowledgment of after work hours, better possibilities for the individual to effect on the company's future direction, more equal treatment (*e.g. equal pay and salary growth*), less micro-management, more appraisal, more appreciation coming from superior, more trust and more own decision power and proper resources for the team.

Do you feel that your company genuinely cares about you?

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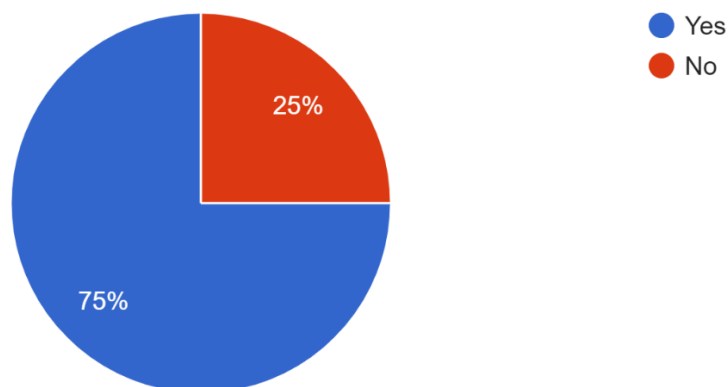


FIGURE Q5. Distribution of responses feeling of company genuinely caring about you.

The figure Q5 above shows the distribution of people feeling that the company genuinely cares them. Great majority of respondents, 75% (9/12), responded 'yes' and 25% (3/12) responded 'no'. Additional comments for this question were the following: Manager listens to input quite well and takes action,

and in a small company everybody is important. In addition, there is understanding in place of private life impacting the work and employees feel that they are being treated as human beings.

The answers why some respondents do not feel genuinely cared about were wondering if the company cares about employees functioning rather than sincerely caring, someone also answered that the promises of the salary upgrades and career advancement had not been kept, and that companies in general do not care because they are simply legal entities.

Would you agree with the saying "If you take care of your employees, they will take care of you":

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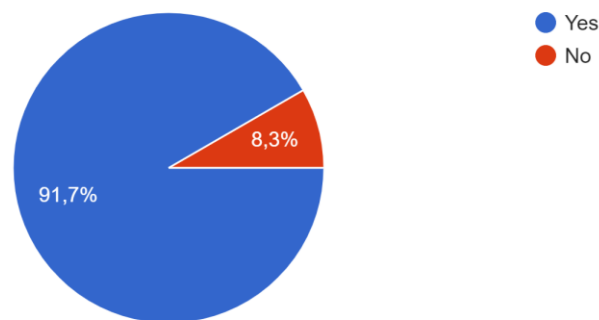


FIGURE Q6. Distribution on agreeing or not with statement *"If you take care of your employees, they will take care of you"*

The most unanimous answer with 91,7% (11/12) agreement was given to the question of would you agree with the statement *"If you take care of your employees, they will take care of you"*. Only 1 out of 12 people disagreed with it, resulting in 8,3%, as the figure Q6 above shows.

Another fairly unanimous response was with **83,3% of the respondents feeling that their supervisor cares about them genuinely** (10/12 respondents), 16,7% do not feel so (2/12 respondents). Explanations for the positive answer included that managers, if necessary, also help out with no work-related issues. And that they listen to input and take action and try to improve work conditions in many innovative ways. In addition, managers having a great impact on professional

development and that they try hard to keep promises. Perceived areas for improvement include that caring on team level is sometimes not on par with the good care on personal level.

Best leadership memories from respondents' whole work history included appreciation, brainstorming new and solid product ideas, getting approval for some bigger investment concerning personal work with the need being realized, getting people to work together, and when feeling lost managers never got angry or annoyed about asking for reassurance for multiple times.

The question if **respondents believe that their feedback is taken immediately serious yielded at an even answer distribution with 58,3% (7/12) replying 'yes', and 41,7% (5/12) replying 'no'**. The comments behind the responses were following: Many requests were at least partially deployed while others were not, transparency what happens with feedback could be improved. Some respondents feel that their feedback is taken seriously by own manager right away.

To the open question “*What could your employer do to support your well-being so you could be your best and bring your best to the workplace?*” the responses were following:

- Alignment of manpower, resources and training
- Enable people to act according to skills and position
- Improving the current compensation system
- Less interruptions with minor issues, if possible
- Less micromanagement
- Listening what people have to say and consider their feedback
- More trust
- Not inflicting unnecessary stress and pressure
- Offering different fringe benefits, e.g. free massages
- Prompting people to take more care of their health
- Readiness to help out when problems occur

The answers to the next question “***What would make you more committed to your current work / company?***” were the following: By improving co-operation with other teams and team leaders, salary raise and/or promotion (*several answers*), being praised more frequently for a job well done (*several answers*), more trust, possibility to have more impact on the company’s future direction (*several answers*), increased customer exposition, more time to do things well and suggestions being more considered at company meetings.

To the question “***What keeps you engaged with a company? (Engaged = You are thriving and motivated at work on daily basis)***” responses were:

- Appreciation and hearing “thank you” when appropriate
- Company's growth
- Equality
- Feeling as a part of the big picture and having an impact
- Feeling that my ideas matter and bring improvements
- Good product and great colleagues
- Having enough support to accomplish tasks and to grow
- Loyal customers
- New tasks, projects and customers
- Overall team feeling – working with each other and not against each other

Respondents acknowledge that the company currently rewards them with salary and commission (*in some cases*), by giving more responsibility, through promotion and raise, by supporting personal development e.g. the ability to study while working. However, 5/12 of the respondents felt that the company does not reward them.

Do you have clear understanding of your career or promotion path?

12 vastausta

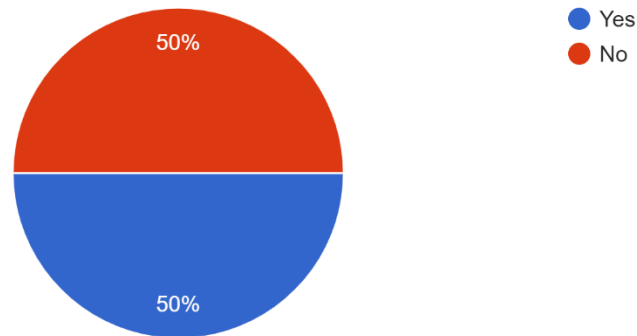


FIGURE Q7. Distribution on having clear understanding of career or promotion path.

The figure Q7 above shows the distribution for the question “Do you have clear understanding of your career or promotion path?” Half, 50% of the respondents responded ‘Yes’ and the other half, 50% equally responded ‘No’.

Is there someone at your work who encourages your development?

12 vastausta

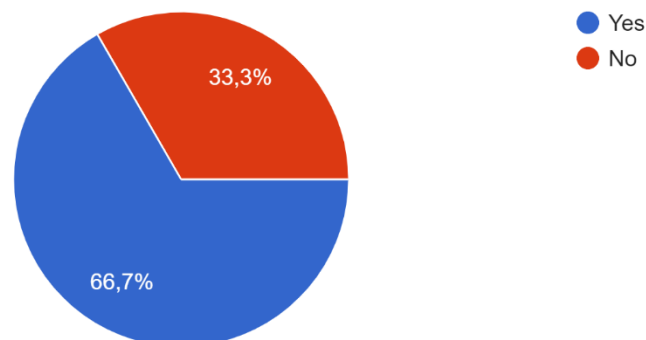


FIGURE Q8. Distribution of is there someone at work encouraging development.

Figure Q8 above shows the distribution of having someone at work encouraging development. **66,7% (8/12) of respondents say that there is someone at work who encourages their development** and 33,3% (4/12) that there is not.

Also, **75% (9/12) feels passionate at their current job** whereas 25% (3/12) do not. The reasons for being passionate were similar with the response of following and last question.

The survey concluded with the question “*What especially makes you feel passionate at your work currently?*”

The answers were:

- Flexibility what comes to distribution of work time
- Getting things done
- Great team to work with
- Grounds for innovation and to revolutionize how customers do things
- Helping own people succeed and seeing them happy
- Loyal and interesting customers, good product
- Moving things actively ahead instead of just fixing problems
- Recent accomplishments
- Working on meaningful tasks/projects that match also own interests

6.6 Thesis Author’s Recommendations

Based on the theory of this thesis and in the light of this study, the state of the company leadership is in fairly good shape and in the right direction. The results show that the staff is engaged with the company and motivated.

Now, the recommendation is to emphasize the good. Appreciative inquiry (AI) method which was introduced in chapter 4.4. could be utilized at BaseN. The company could continue investigating more deeply what their employees feel that is right in the company and then to emphasize that. As the most employees are engaged and passionate about their job, this could and should be spread to the whole personnel.

The results show that there are feelings of inequality. The company could try to find out specifically what those issues are, and make improvements. Whether it is inequality between genders, race, ages, wages or overall treatment it would be important to affirm the sense of equality, adding people to feel even more valued.

Half of the respondents did not have a clear understanding of their career or promotion path. The study does not show whether the company has a clear promotion path or not. Therefore, the solution could be either to communicate the existing path so that everyone understands. Or create a path, which can be clearly followed and understood by both – leaders and employees. This could also be something to foster motivation as the employees would have clear understanding how to advance in their career and how different level jobs would pay.

As this study was concentrating on a company as a whole, instead of individuals, the emphasis was purposely put on the target group and individual answers got less attention. In order to gain sensitive responses, it was promised that confidential or heart-to-heart responses would not be shared in detail. The focus was totally on the current situation as a whole.

Future emphasis could also be put on how to meet the different needs of different generations. The online survey did not examine the situation with Millennials at BaseN but this could be useful to remember when planning future leadership. Are the ones in the company well-led and how to overall tempt them to work and stay with the company?

As the study revealed the skills young professionals require from their leaders to have good communication skills, empathy and the desire to help them succeed along with responsibility and freedom without micromanagement. (HR Viesti magazine, 2019, 42). These matters could be followed by mentorship programs for young professionals in order for them to find their place when entering the company. BaseN could also consider having coaching more broadly available for employees.

The company could also have a look on leadership in more detail now based on the information provided for both (love and fear) leadership styles, and examine whether there are differences between managers. This could help on concentrating to develop leadership skills.

Overall, having open atmosphere of leadership challenges with both successes and failures can help both leaders and employees to open up, spot some poor behaviors and continue developing better ones based on this study.

One of the strengths of the company, communication can be seen in their CEO blog. As the study revealed the importance of communication in chapter 3.4. The CEO is in the key position communicating the company direction (Alahuhta, 2018, 129-130; Ollila, 2013, 161). This could also be done in the future through blogs by emphasizing and communication company's values and direction and linking the employees to the concrete vision.

Utilizing the diversity could be an ongoing theme. Not only concerning the genders and race, but also attracting employees of different ages and backgrounds in the future as well. Also, what comes to the C-level (*executive level*) diversity, maybe there can be seen female CEO leading BaseN one day?

While doing the research, I came up with the idea that maybe BaseN (management team) could collaborate and help other organizations, such as HUS, to improve their workplace conditions as well. Because there is a real need for that.

Last but not least, as the company knows its personnel, to read the theory part and results thoroughly and tune in and feel where the respondents (and the whole company) could really be acknowledged in order to create even better workplace and to maintain it.

The broader results of this online survey and study along with the suggestions on how to maintain the engaging corporate culture when company grows (*where love is seen as a critical success factor*) will be shared more detailed with the BaseN staff. **Some questions involved in their survey were not dealt in this thesis as they did not bring significance to the results to this study as whole.*

7 DISCUSSION

The online survey conducted for BaseN personnel was able to shed light on the current leadership culture within the company and to demonstrate the connection between love-based leadership and committed employees. Although not everyone answered the questionnaire, the results were able to illuminate the company's current situation. Compared to the percentage of HUS responses in Section 5.1. with a response rate as low as 3,6% (*almost non-existent*), the number of replies received is even more appreciated and the response severity is more appreciated.

The level of engagement at BaseN seems very high (*good*) compared to the level in Western Europe provided by Gallup in Section 2.4. The years of employment support this fact quite clearly. All in all, it can be seen that people are quite satisfied and motivated. However, because this research is different (certain traceable group of people) and tracking individual responses better, some answers may be polished.

BaseN staff (respondents) seem to value similar things which were mentioned in theory part. They feel that they can impact the company direction, that they have good opportunities in the company and freedom to manage their own time to set their own success. They also have managers who take actions when they are informed about issues.

Respondents seem to value their coworkers, some mentioning the importance of realizing that someone enjoys and appreciates working with them. Having great team to work with makes people feel passionate, as well as, getting things done and having ground for innovations. Also, helping own people to succeed and seeing them happy, and moving things actively ahead instead of just fixing problems. This interestingly points to AI method. Perhaps BaseN has it already in use, without realizing that.

Future ideas were given for BaseN to support its employees' well-being so that they could be their best and bring their best to the workplace. These matters especially aligning with what young professionals require from their employer. As

there were some respondent(s) not feeling as valued, everyone could consider if there is something they can do differently, in order for others to feel more valued.

When comparing the basic theory of this study with the results of BaseN's current leadership, it is good to note that most respondents feel that their supervisors genuinely care about them. This point was highlighted by many successful leaders around the world. Employees must be prioritized and must feel that they are truly cared for. That will be a road to success.

Most of the respondents felt that there was someone at work who encouraged their development. Gallup studies show the connection between high performing and enthusiastic employee to the fact that someone at work encourages their development. (Gallup, 2017,2) This is good news for the company's future. High performing employees are also innovative.

The whole research began with the author's dream of getting companies to open their eyes and see the value of their employees and begin to show it. The core idea for this study was picked from blog of the founder of the company, which stated that love is a critical success factor in management. One of the areas of interest of the study was whether this guiding principle can be seen in the results. It is fair to say that the results support the fact that this principle can be seen in the real life at BaseN, as the study revealed that overall love (*carrots and collaboration*) is seen as the company's dominant leadership style instead of fear (*sticks, command and control*), and how people are led. The dominance of empowerment, accountability, and compassion as ways of love-leadership supported the main view as well.

Some respondents felt that fear was the more dominant the leadership style (*with repression, irresponsibility and coldness*). This also shows the human factor. Leaders too, are human and mistakes and miscommunication occasionally happen. However, this is something I would put emphasis in the future as well.

Respondents were most unanimous with the statement, which is also mentioned in the theory part: *If you take care of your employees, they will take care of you*. This supports the fact that employer's actions are important to employees, and

when they are treated well, they will also act better, reflecting the employer's behavior. This question was asked for couple of reasons: First, it will be examined whether this generally has a place in the thinking of employees. And whether employees see the connection between the employer's activities or not.

The results show some deviation, especially with work-life balance between employees. Obviously, there is a place for improvement for many. In this context, it should be noted that this is not only a work-related matter. The capabilities to balance work and private life can not only be led from work. The company felt the need to examine this as well in order to consider ways for improvement if needed.

Most respondents feel passionate about their current job. This is really good news because passion is the key to engaged employees (*also one of BaseN's core values*) and a factor that makes people take responsibility for the change rather than just being content with the current situation.

Ideas for the future leadership and success of the company can be found in the theory part (chapters 2 to 5), in the questionnaire responses and in the discussion section. There are certainly issues to be addressed and improved regarding the treatment and inequality of feedback, compensation, or career advancement (or its communication).

The appreciative inquiry method can also be very useful for BaseN as well (*just as it has been for other companies mentioned earlier*) - strengthening what is good, not pointing the weaknesses or past mistakes, and giving more room for error and humanity to deal with daily situations.

All in all, we all need to learn new and safer ways to communicate, taking into account neuroscientific facts, and remembering how leaders of this generation are to empower and inspire others by leading through love and empathy.

BaseN can now, based on this opus Lead through Love, create their own functional love-leadership system that defines the most important elements. Also, it should be regularly checked that everyone is holding on to it and if not, plan how to identify changes & red flags and to navigate back to the right direction. ♡

8 CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study was to find ways to improve leadership by utilizing the power of love as a tool (*more humane leadership style*) to engage employees better with companies.

As a result, this thesis was able to answer the primary research question *What's love got to do with leadership (initial name of this study)* extensively. Love really has a lot to do with leadership. Especially when it is missing, the consequences are catastrophic.

Based on this study, love should be widely recognized as a critical success factor for modern organizations. For those who understand its great impact, it is very useful. While fear-based leadership only results instantaneous profits, love-based leadership builds a lifetime.

Leading with love covers the entire working life circle, leading not only to healthier and happier workplaces, but also to true relationships with customers who are loved and keep coming back. Therefore, the era of fear-based leadership should be left behind as useless and dead, and continue here by leading through love. Interestingly, fear-based leadership has gained widespread media coverage for decades, but no alternative has been presented.

This study was able to provide a wide range of answers to the secondary question (applying part of the study) posed by the commissioning company BaseN: How is it possible to maintain the engaging corporate culture when company grows (*where love is seen as a critical success factor*)?

It is possible to maintain committing work culture by ensuring that people feel valued and safe (*sense of psychological security*) and have a purpose (*related to passion*). Employees also need to be well-equipped and in the most appropriate role. Everyone needs to be inspired to do their best every day to perform better they can even imagine, which also leads to career advancement.

In the absence of previous research on the employee engagement levels of the commissioning company, responses were given in the broader sense of what factors influence employee engagement in the corporate culture in general. However, this study through online survey provides an opportunity to review the current state and continue here as the basic information has been obtained.

The by-products of this study were discoveries of the challenges the Fourth Industrial Revolution has raised and the discovery of the new kind of leadership it requires, interestingly pointing to love-based leadership. The study also revealed the unique needs of Millennials and Generation Z and their difficulty in adapting to working life. In order to improve current situation of the “*burned-out generation*” correcting measures should be taken immediately.

Combined theory also provides the reader with a mirror (*leader or not*) to reflect the dominant leadership style in their organization and ideas for improvement. Everyone can and must do their part to contribute to better future workplaces. Be the best boss, colleague or subordinate - we all have a role and can make a difference.

Love leadership puts the employee clearly ahead of the customers and does not apologize. When employees feel that they are genuinely cared, they really take care of the company and its customers. Both, as well as the theory of this study and the results of the case study survey, show. When employees are not feeling well, the customers won't be either. Love is the glue that keeps everything together.

A future research suggestion could be to explore the state of love leadership of Marriott and a few other global players.

An anonymous comment from online research confirmed that the personal goal of this study was achieved, this study impacting even one person: “*Thank you for researching and putting such an extensive effort to improve the life of strangers.*”

Love in its simplicity means caring for others, both at home and at work. There really is no difference. – Juudit Ojansivu

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