



*Sigfried W. Andersen*

# Next Generation LEADERSHIP NEWS

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# How Do You Derail?

*By Heidi Juul – Associate Partner at KF Andersen Leadership Academy*



Two-thirds of people in leadership positions will fail. They will be fired, demoted, or kicked upstairs.

The most common reason for their failures is the inability to build or maintain a team – in other words the ability to practice leadership!

Leadership failure is by no means an uncommon trait in business – but turning failure into success is seemingly a secret for the few individuals who succeed.

## **Maybe we can help you?**

In today's environment, the only constant is the demand for change hitting the shores of every company like waves on every beach – adapt to the financial crises, outsmart new competitors, adopt new technology, navigate new customer patterns, et cetera – we are under constant pressure to keep up and stay ahead.

The only place to look for answers is in your people - to navigate the complexities, to stay calm and collected, to execute and to learn and grow as

individuals and as teams.

It is a lot to put on people's shoulders, but the most successful companies have institutionalized this culture by maintaining a rigorous selection of talents, by training the 'the raw product', and by only promoting those who can manage themselves and others - not the derailleurs.

## **Another busy day at work**

Another busy day at the office comes and goes. You attend endless meetings of this and that, all of which seems to have no immediate and direct impact on creating results. Nevertheless, others feel that your attendance is valued and needed. You arrive to your desk late in the day, the inbox stacked with another 75 emails, unanswered phone calls, and your partner sending even more annoying messages about your lack of response to a request to stop by the grocery store.

Then, in steps your colleague to offer you a small update on a pressing issue, which causes you to spout off on him in an irritated and unfounded fashion.

## **What just happened?**

Well, you were derailed. You let go of the best version of yourself and defaulted to 'the other side' of your otherwise professional character. This behaviour is not about managers with psychopathic traits, but derives from managers who are competent, ambitious and driven.

Everyone in management positions at one time or

another behaves inappropriately, as everyone has a personality with "two facespages" - we can both be empathetic and a derailer.

The term 'derailer' denotes a negative behavior that creates problems for people. This characteristic emergesIt is seen under pressure – and, oddly, also when we gain significant success, as it stems from the same source: 'Unknown territory'.

When under great pressure, our personalities can change to reflect insecurities; it can feel 'dangerous' to be in these unknown areas

You might have been headhunted into a new position where you are trying to find your feet and in which you know neither the job, the organization, your staff nor your manager. In the same breath, you know you have to develop a different management style to act appropriately with a new organizational level. You feel pressured to deliver and to meet the high expectations and return value for the money the company has put into recruiting you.

Most certainly, you will feel alone and in unknown territory. You are at a high risk to derail!

Similarly, being successful is like finding yourself in new territory, as we often start overestimating ourselves and underestimating others.

The largest business scandals are caused by leaders who have achieved 'so much' success that they reach a "the tipping point". They have overestimated their own capacity and think they can "walk on water".



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Notably, 65% of the managers who derail do it in connection with a job change or a promotion. You can derail at any point in your career, so be careful when the brain starts taking on a life of its own.

### The brain protects itself under pressure!

What triggers people to derail differs from person to person - a low stress threshold, a specific person, or a feeling of, "I get crazy by not seeing changes fast enough"!

Derailers spring to life in a busy environment when your guards are down and when you 'forget' to be professional.

When somebody feels pressured, it will release a message to the primitive part of the brain to react in a defense-dominated way. We react emotionally and with no or little consideration for our surroundings - we just let off steam - and this reaction typically happens before we can realize it. In other words, the brain works faster than you can think yourself.

The solution is to know your derailers, and then to develop strategies to prevent the outcomes. Don't be afraid of your derailers, but take them seriously and, above all, work to develop new action strategies to help avoid problems.

### Here, we can help you.

We will help you map your derailers, to detail them when they occur, and to develop strategies to cope with them.

In our Business Mentoring program, we use personality assessment tools, reflection and dialogue to offer you a clear picture of the pros and cons of the two sides of your personality. We set you on track

to handle both pressure and success so that they don't unduly influence your performance, potentially destroy your excellent leadership skills or, in the worst case, ruin your entire career.

Business mentoring gives you a clear understanding of your performance capabilities, challenges, and core drivers and provides you with strategic self-awareness that makes you excel beyond your perceived capabilities.

It's all about leadership - excellent leadership. When great leadership prevails, organizations and people prosper. Bad leadership causes disengaged workers, corporate corruption and business disasters.

Organizations depend on outstanding and well-balanced leaders to make important tactical decisions, manage changing market trends, and set strategic vision.

Therefore, we welcome you to our business mentoring. You don't have to be one of the two-thirds who fail in their leadership position!

## Have You Considered Our Business Mentoring with Heidi Juul?

Read more at:  
<http://bit.ly/1cXMIZt>



The outstanding team of  
**"The Will to Lead"**  
in Dubai  
February 23 - 27, 2014

"Leadership is about being generous - understanding that you are the servant of the people around you, your colleagues and manager - offering your all and your best - then you gain respect and followers".

*Siegfried W. Andersen*





## Are You Antiquating?

*By Dennis Falk Jakobsen – Senior Partner at KF Andersen Leadership Academy*



Yes – definitely!

That is, 1 cm a day to be exact. Day by day, week by week you are antiquating. Becoming obsolete – expiring!

Falling out of fashion is a common thing in business life – but unfortunately a very expensive one – and is particularly sad because, in most cases, the process could have been avoided.

Just think of the collapse of the American car industry and some parts of the European industry too – was it likely that nobody had seen the crises coming? Off course they had! Was it that they had no chance to reverse their fortunes along the way? Off course they had!

Arrogance, blindness and intellectual ignorance prevented anyone from reacting fast or decisively enough.

Can this happen to you? Absolutely – it is happening daily – you are becoming an older oak on a team with fresher and crisper legs.

The HBR Review January 2014 carried the article “How Netflix Re-Invented HR” – which led me to some interesting observations.

Netflix realized that hiring audaciously good people for a specific time and function offered returns of 2 x productivity and 10 x innovation compared to hiring fair and good “lifer” team players. Not much news there, but...

What Netflix seems to have institutionalized is a very pragmatic approach to viewing people's do-ability. Either you are in or you are out. There is nothing about carrying “dead wood” around – i.e., people whose job or function is diminishing in value or could be taken over by technology, thus people needing re-positioning, de-learning, re-learning and getting up to speed again. This has costs.

To Netflix, people are interchangeable, like replacing an old machine with a new model.

The result is that employees at Netflix must constantly upgrade, improve, re-new themselves – learn at least 1.5 cm a day – because otherwise, you are antiquated – expired!

Critics will claim that the approach of Netflix causes fear and insecurity in the organization, as people can be tapped on the shoulder any day and be gone the next (extremely generous severance packages ensure that people find comfort in leaving). They are right, especially if it is never a topic of discussion, i.e., “where are we going - which talents and capabilities are we in need of in the coming months and years – and how do you fit in?”.

Strangely, the same dialogue is part of the daily life in the sporting world. In soccer, which is my area of some expertise, managers are constantly looking to upgrade their teams, as they fully know that players expire with age, injuries can halt the best players, talents may never develop, etc. – constant adjustment is needed to provide what is needed to bring the team to a higher level. Sir Alex Ferguson was a master of this discipline, and over 26 years, he won 13 English Championships with at least 4 fundamentally different teams.

Mr. Ferguson understood the importance of planning ahead and identifying new needs arising 3-5 years

down the road.

So here is my question – what do you do to avoid becoming antiquated?

- Have you read the 5 best books in the world on the topic of your work?
- When did you last sit down with your manager, your employees, your colleagues or your peers to draw up a plan for your development – not just “cognitive learning” – but also behavioral changes and upgrades needed to stay relevant in the years to come.
- Have you synchronized the strategic developments and requirements of your company over the coming 3-5 years with how you intend and expect to develop personally?

I mean, is it not interesting that people hardly know what they should contribute to their company beyond the next 12 months when the company knows where it is will be in 5 years?

Is that called taking the lead... or being pulled along?

Surprisingly many people do not take the time and effort to align themselves with the requirements of the future – or even with the issues of today. I call that being ignorant and having intellectual blind spots.

Be careful – it may actually catch up with you one day – so take the lead – make sure you are on the top of your game!

KF Andersen's Business Mentoring may be of help to you.

Just think about it!





# What Have You Learned at Work Today?

*By Siegfried W. Andersen, CEO and founder of KF Andersen Leadership Academy*



## **Learning Transformed Into Experience**

"What did you learn in school today?" is a very profound question. So are...

- "What did you learn at work today—or in the last year?"
- "What did you learn at home today, in the last year or in the

last few years?"

- "What have you learned from your life so far?"

Several years ago, I met a gentleman who claimed he had 25 years of working experience.

I immediately responded by asking two questions.

"Does that mean you have been here for 25 years?" He said "Yes", and I continued, "But that does not necessarily prove that you have 25 years of experience. Please tell me what you have learned in the last year. Four things, please."

He could not tell me. It was not that easy, he said. "But then you only have 24 years of experience. Right?"

This anecdote reflects two observations: 1) if you do not determine what you have learned, either you cannot add anything to your experience or you have not learned anything, which is even worse; 2) 25 years of experience might be 1 year of experience repeated 25 times or five years of experience repeated five times.

This is a reality for many people.

Who is responsible for recording learning and experiences in the workplace? First, the employee is responsible and second, the boss. Employees easily accept this responsibility. Bosses find it more difficult for two reasons: we are not used to it, and when we do it, we do it incorrectly.

## **At school**

The incorrect way of giving precise feedback on learning is on display as early as primary school. You earn an A in math, but that does not indicate anything about what you have learned from completing 342 arithmetic assignments over an entire year. At best, the grade reflects that your teacher appreciates your efforts and that you are successful in building a strong relationship with him or her. It offers no indication of your ability to transform the new mathematic knowledge into any useful experience! This case is an example of poor feedback. Nonetheless, you gave your son 10 dollars for the A with a command: "More of that, please!" This is misdirection in practice, and after five years, five A grades and 50 dollars later, you learned a dramatic lesson: it is boring and useless to go to school. What an experience!

## **Chess Mate**

At work, it is time for performance appraisals. You have put in time and effort for the past 12 months, and the appraisal evaluates the value you have added and your engagement living the company values. The discussion of your performance ends with a grade, not an A, but something similar: a judgment of "high - as expected"

or 3.65 points on a scale from 1 - 5. Voila, not bad!

What you have learned from that process? You cannot tell your boss, if you want to keep your job.

Again, you were completely misdirected. The only issue on your mind now is how to raise that figure to at least 4.0. You do not know exactly what you have to do, so you start out with a qualified guess and work on that for the next year, pleasing your boss.

What you do not know is that your boss's boss together with HR now sit around a table with Bell-Curves and Power-Curves, evaluating whether you are an A, B or C-man for the company. If you are determined to be a C-man, you are in the first wave when it comes to downsizing.

However, you are almost innocent because you never tried to change the situation, noting down your learning progress and discussing how you transformed that new knowledge into experience, adding value to the company.

I hope the value you added was more than your salary. Otherwise, you are technically insolvent and in bad standing.

This evaluation process will still not reveal what experience you have gained in that job.

Sadly, I observe this situation repeatedly when people send me their CV asking for help applying for a new job. They include four pages stipulating what they have done and the results they have delivered - 9 out of 10 for a solo ride !





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It is fascinating that the resumes lack even a single word about who has helped their authors; who the authors helped or what they have learned from their work, how they transformed that knowledge into useful experiences for the next task and how that added value to the job, their people, their boss' job, the department, the business unit, the company or the customers.

This information is not included because they do not know it. The jobseekers have never focused on their value added, and nobody ever told them. This is a very sneaky way playing your-self chess mate.

## Feed-Back Analysis as Coaching

Performance appraisals should not involve grades but instead indicate several clear expectations and describe how completing them will strengthen your self-assurance.

Let me try to exemplify this recommendation with the following mock appraisal discussion. Please note that whatever decision is made during the session, it must relate to a KPI (hard or soft) and how to execute it. It has to be crystal clear: Who does what and when? And what is the expected outcome?

The boss should start by saying ...

1. "Let me explain my priorities and how your job contributes to my job, enabling me to fulfill the expectations of my boss.

a. "..."

b. ...

c. ... (Etc.)

Feel free to ask questions."

2. "Let me also explain how my job fits into my boss' job and how that adds value to the entire value chain and to our customers.

a. ...

b. ...

c. ... (Etc.)

Feel free to ask questions."

Then the discussion turns in your direction.

3. What were the expected results for your job in the past year?

a. Typically, anything between 5 and 15 SMART goals. The number depends on the level of your position, i.e., team leader, leader of managers, leader of a function, or leader of a business unit.

b. If you are a manager or a leader, one of the SMART goals will be how you can simplify the workflow within your area of responsibility. How can you increase the renewal ratio and productivity?

c. If you are a manager or a leader, you have at least one SMART goal about how to improve the customer relationship from your perspective.

d. If you have management or leadership responsibilities, one of the SMART goals is to deliver three names of employees who are ready for promotion within your team, including whom, to what position and when?

I Who is ready to assume your own position?

II Others?

4. What have you delivered for each of the SMART goals?

a. What have you learned?

(The learning curve indicates that the more times you perform a task, the more productive you should be. Have you explored this concept?)

b. Did you made yourself responsible for extra workloads? If so, which ones?

c. c. How did your tasks add value, and in what areas?

d. How did you support the team?

e. Did you collaborate with anyone from outside the department, unit, or company?

I With whom did you collaborate, and what role did the cooperation play in your tasks?

II What job did your collaborator have?

f. What ideas did you implement, and how did you implement them?

I Did your ideas make the task easier or simpler?

II Do you have other ideas to simplify your own job?

g. How was your planning?

I Did you follow your plans?

II Did you involve anyone in your plans?

h. How did you organize your resources?

I Who helped you to organize?

5. How do you embody the company values?

I Are you a "Giver" or a "Taker"?

II How do you appraise yourself on each value and subvalue?

6. What have you learned as an outcome from what we have discussed so far?





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7. Next, transform your learning into experience by exceeding past performance.

a. How can you improve your total outcome of your job by 20-30% during the next year?

i ...

ii ...

iii ... (Etc.)

8. Discuss what is needed to accomplish that goal.

a. What can you contribute?

b. What can I contribute?

c. Is there anyone else who ought to contribute?

d. What extra tools, skills, or methods are required?

e. What ideas do you have for changes?

9. Intensify the discussion: How do you feel? Please explain. Do not accept simple "yes" and "no" answers.

a. Do you feel prepared to complete tasks?

b. Do you feel full of energy?

c. Do you feel powerful?

d. Do you feel decisive?

e. Do you feel ready to ask for help?

f. Do you feel ready to make a change?

g. Do you feel eager ?

h. Do you feel insecure about your situation and where it will take you?

i. Do you feel it is easy to fulfill the expectations discussed?

j. Do you feel dependent on help from others?

k. Do you feel uplifted, full of hope and motivated?

l. Do you feel I can trust you and that you can

trust me?

m. Do you feel that you have strong self-discipline?

n. Do you feel that there are topics we have not discussed?

10. What have you learned from this appraisal?

a. ...

b. ...

c. ...

11. What do you perceive as your strength, based on this appraisal? Prioritize please.

a. ...

b. ...

c. ...

12. Are you considering a job change?

13. Feel free to add anything you would like to here.

14. With our signature, both of us agree that all of the above topics have been discussed:

Place and date:

\_\_\_\_\_

This document is not confidential. Either of us can show this document to people we trust inside the company or family.

This form is our documentation for the agreement we have made. Please do not duplicate it.

We will each keep a copy, and only those two copies will exist.

...

Let me repeat my previous question: What have you learned at work today, and how do you intend to put it to future use?

Please contact us at:

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Email: [ngl@kfandersen.com](mailto:ngl@kfandersen.com)

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