



Success in Managing Diversity

Esther Mollema

DIRE<TION

The most important lessons from
Esther Mollema's Succes in Veelvoud,
a diversity DIY, summarized and
translated for leaders who want
to build High Performance Teams.

Success in Managing Diversity

**A diversity DIY for leaders that want to build
High Performance Teams**

Esther Mollema

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As a manager, you should learn to identify and understand cultural differences. Do you, for example, know whether you belong to the F-culture of the C-culture? Or which people in your team are introverts and which are extroverts? A good leader knows these distinct worlds, and knows how to merge them into one, strong team

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For over ten years, we have been training talented people with diverse backgrounds that want to take measures into their own hands when it comes to their ambitions. We would like to share the most important insights with you. This because they are important to everyone (Also to managers!)

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Preface

For over ten years, I studied, lived and worked abroad. When I came back to the Netherlands, it struck me that in a country where equality of all citizens is now considered a key asset, role and task stereotyping is still present. This could also be seen in organizations. Whenever I got assigned to the position of a leadership trainer by a Dutch company, I worked merely with men, mostly white and of the same age as well. Even at companies that were clearly internationally oriented. I began to wonder: 'What happened to all the other talents?'

I decided to investigate this matter and started my research about women and leadership. It turned out to be a good choice because diversity in the broadest sense starts with fostering the promotion of women. This will be explained in detail in the first chapter of this book.

Step by step I gained more insight and developed an understanding of women and ambitions, the way men and women perceive these, and how careers are made. Together with my colleagues from Direction, I designed a training program for women to provide them with the insights that will help them realize their ambitions.

The female participants in these trainings introduced us to their organizations and we started to work with their managers as well. They requested our help on diversity challenges regarding age, cultural differences and personality. Every assignment and cooperation brought new experiences and insights. I noticed that knowledge about diversity within the organization was only allocated to a select group, and that had to change.

In 2009, I wrote a (Dutch) book about women, leadership, ambitions, organizations and excellent performance. The biggest drive behind the book was that if we'd really want to perform better, people at all levels within organizations should know more about diversity and why it is so difficult to manage. The book made it to the Dutch long-list of management books of the year, and became a bestseller.

After the first book was published, we already knew that a big part of the solution lies in the understanding of how the brain works and how it labels and judges other people. Not because the brain intends to discriminate, but in order for it to make the millions of decisions it has to make every day, it needs to generalize. I call these short-cuts the brain takes "mindbugs", based on the example of Mahzarin Banaji, who introduced me to the concept. Mindbugs explain why a person might think that they are selecting the most qualified candidate, whereas actually they are not. The brain works in a different way. At Direction we have been developing our knowledge about the human brain through studying a lot of relevant scientific research and talking with neuroscientists. Also, we developed test tools and did our own research. By doing this, we discovered all the puzzle pieces forming the whole that explains how diversity can be promoted. Every day, we start a dialogue with managers, who want to build excellent performing teams, about how to effectively foster diversity. I talk a lot about this subject with a lot of people. The other day someone said to me: 'Look, it's Mrs. Mindbugs!'

In this translated summary of my book 'Succes in Veelvoud' (Success in Managing Diversity, I'd like to share the key knowledge and insights we've gained over the last years. In addition, I'd like to present share a proven effective approach which will enable you to get real results when it comes to managing diversity. The summary contains several practical examples of approaches that work, and approaches that don't work. With this summary, I would like to help those managers who do not want to wait for the next policy statements or diversity KPIs, but intrinsically want what's best for their teams and organization. Those managers who want to handle things by themselves and who are ready to use tools to make progress when it comes to diversity. We are motivated to make these managers choose the most qualified people for their teams, and show how, together with their employees, they can become a *high performance organization* (HPO).

Diversity in teams, at higher and lower levels within the organization, is a key asset to HPO-teams. HPO-teams improve the entire organization. Better organizations form the basis of a better world. And that is why Mrs. Mindbugs wrote this book.

Wageningen, September 30th, 2015



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Unprecedented diversity



Some myths

*“Nothing much happens
in a sea of sameness”*

Alexander Rinnooy Kan, Professional Boards Forum, 2013

Diversity is about you.

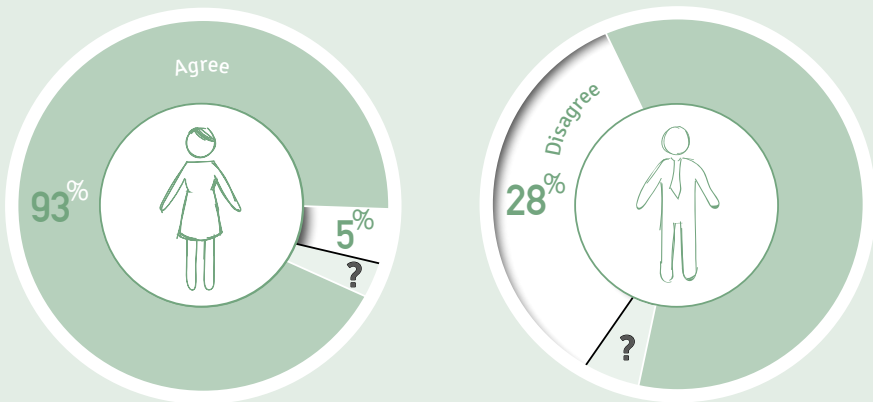
Diversity is not about the white men at the top of the hierarchical ladder maintaining the glass ceiling which holds back diverse talent. Diversity is about all of us, and therefore our responsibility. This is not just Direction's vision on diversity; this vision is based on international scientific research, on our own research conducted among more than 5000 managers, and on our experience in working together with a lot of (international) organizations, universities, interest groups, and (semi)public organizations, all of which has taken place over a decade. This book will show that we are the ones holding the key to diversity. It's all about ourselves and the way we look at the world around us.

1. Some myths

In general, despite the fact that directors and managers clearly recognize that diversity at every step of the ladder of hierarchy is an inescapable part of the future, diverse talent continuously fails to climb the ladder. Over the last four years, Direction interviewed 5163 managers about their preferences in leadership. No less than 94.6% of the respondents stated to perceive men and women as equally competent to be successful leaders. Unfortunately, this promising number does not reflect reality. In 2014 only 34 percent of all Dutch companies had not one single woman in their board of directors or supervisory board. Is this because managers underestimate the obstacles

women face in their pursuit of leading positions, or perhaps because they underestimate women's ambitions? In 2013, the prestigious consultancy firm McKinsey & Company presented 1421 executives around the globe with the following statement: 'Even with equal skills and qualifications, women have much more difficulty reaching top management positions'.

Fewer men acknowledge the challenges female employees face at work.



Source: McKinsey & Company, Women Matter, 2013

Answers to the statement: Even with equal qualifications, women have much more difficulty reaching top-management positions

The answers show that managers are aware of the fact that, despite equal competency, women are disadvantaged in reaching top positions. In our own research among 5163 managers, 18.8% of the male respondents and 34.1% of the female respondents agreed that access to leading positions is not equal for men and women. Both studies reveal that, within the same company, women are more negative about their opportunities than men.

'It's because they're women', is the first conclusion drawn by managers with whom we discuss this matter. 'Women are just not that ambitious'. It also has been said that women have 'multiple ambitions', which refers to the combination of professional – and family life. Research, however, shows no significant differences in ambitions between men and women as a group. Therefore, it is time for us to see ambition as something personal. There are differences in the way men and women profile their ambitions; men do it more often and more clearly.

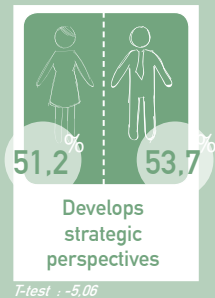
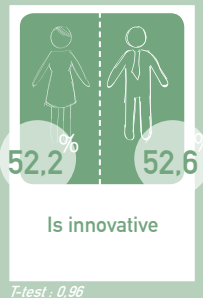
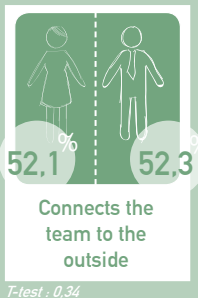
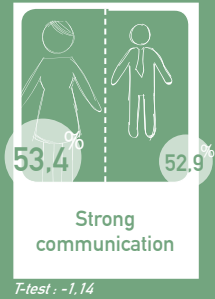
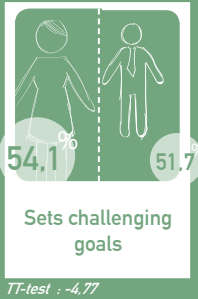
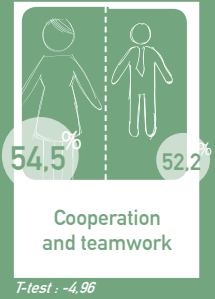
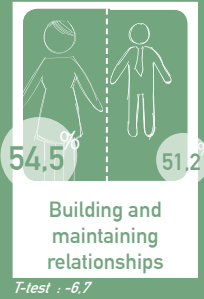
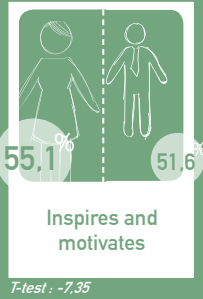
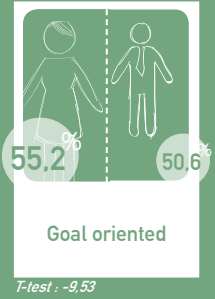
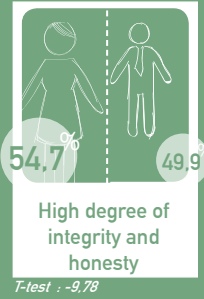
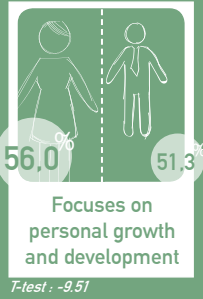
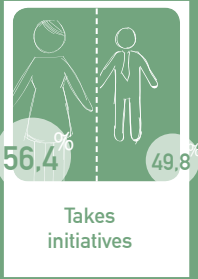
Queen Bees : women that do not want more women

Yes, they exist. 'Arrived' female top managers who consider very few other women qualified enough to occupy a leading position within their organization. These are women who don't want anything to do with initiatives that will lead to increased diversity. Fortunately, these women, the Queen Bees, are seldom encountered. They are as rare as contemporary male managers who are still against diversity. Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, is an amazing exemplary top executive woman who is

fully committed to increasing diversity. In her book 'Lean In', (highly recommended!) Sandberg openly tells about her own way to the top, including her insecurities and setbacks. Her great merit is that in her top position, she is not afraid to show her vulnerabilities. That openness and vulnerability brings progress to the discussion on diversity.

If women are equally competent and ambitious, what's keeping them from reaching leading positions? Do women possess different leadership qualities, which are less required or less desired within current organizations? Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman studied over 16,000 360-degree evaluations in which managers were assessed by their colleagues, executives, and employees; on every level, from team leader to executive management, women had a higher score than men. Also remarkable: the higher in the organization, the greater the differences between men and women. Women really make a difference in the top. The total score of the 360-degree evaluations shows that women in general score higher than men on 12 points, including 'taking initiatives' and 'results-oriented', characteristics that are, thus incorrectly, stereotypically perceived as male leadership qualities.

Women score *higher* on **twelve** of the sixteen leadership competencies



Source: Zenger & Folkman, 2014

In their Women Matter report of 2010, McKinsey described a very interesting study on the nine qualities that really matter in leadership. Organizations that have managers who possess these leadership qualities perform better:

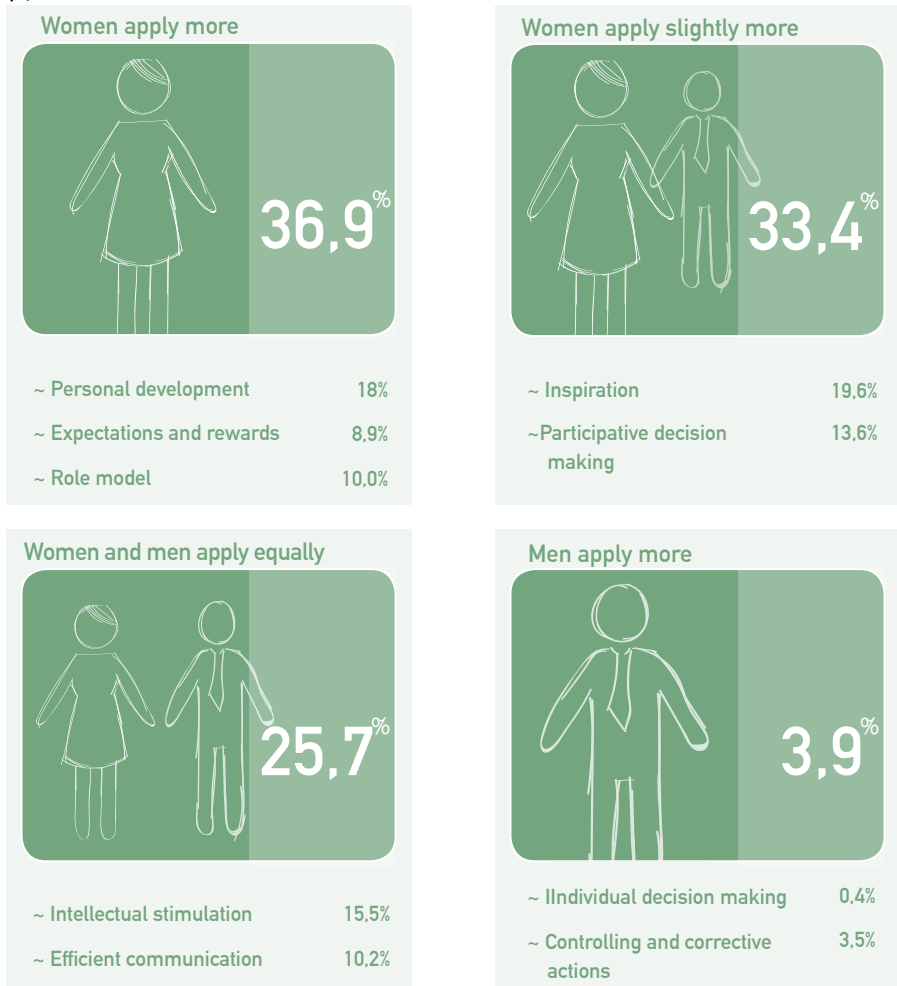
- 1 **Intellectual stimulation:** challenging assumptions, stimulating creativity and taking risks.
- 2 **Role model:** serving as a role model, with emphasis on building respect and accounting for the ethical consequences of decisions.
- 3 **Inspiration:** presenting a persuasive vision on the future and an inspiring optimism about the execution of that vision.
- 4 **Participative decision making:** creating a team spirit in which everyone is encouraged to participate in the decision making.
- 5 **People development:** investing in training and supporting of, and listening to the individual needs and wishes of an employee.
- 6 **Controlling and corrective actions:** monitoring performances and taking corrective measures when needed.
- 7 **Efficient communication:** communicating in a persuasive way, with charisma.
- 8 **Individual decision making:** preferring to take decisions alone and involving others in the execution of those decisions.
- 9 **Expectations and rewards:** clearly defining the expectations and responsibilities, and rewarding achievement.

We put these qualities into our own questionnaire. We asked our 5163 respondents: 'Which three qualities are most required and needed in your organization?':

- 1 Inspiration: **19,6%**
- 2 People development: **18,0%**
- 3 Intellectual stimulation: **15,5%**
- 4 Participative decision making: **13,8%**
- 5 Efficient communication: **10,2%**
- 6 Role model: **10%**
- 7 Expectations and rewards: **8,9%**
- 8 Controlling and corrective actions: **3,5%**
- 9 Individual decision making: **0,4%**

According to the Women Matter study, women showed to engage in the majority of these important leadership qualities more often than men:

70% of the leadership qualities that managers prefer,
are the qualities often possessed by women



Source: McKinsey & Company, Women Matter, 2013

Of course, not every individual woman possesses these qualities and not every individual man does not possess these qualities. The crucial point is that 'more women in leading positions' perfectly corresponds to the wishes of current decision makers – without them realizing it. How is it possible that managers (m/f) still do not fully realize how well diversity fits their needs an organizational vision? How is it possible that leaders (m/f) do not notice the qualities and talents they are missing? The answer to this question is hidden in the way our brain works.

2

A journey through the brain

Managers are standing up for diversity but often resist policies that oblige them to increase diversity. 'Are you trying to tell me that in order to establish more diversity, we need to appoint other people? We just want to choose the best candidate', is often how managers initially respond to imposed diversity policies. As managers, we want to choose the most qualified candidate and we think that we are capable of doing that, but we're not. To show that it is so, we are going to take you on a journey through the brain.

The human brain works faster than the fastest computer in the whole world. It continuously registers what happens in and around the body. All information enters the brain through the senses; everything one hears, sees, feels and tastes is transmitted to the brain by the nervous system. It is up to the brain to create an overview in this abundance of observations. The nerve cells absorb all stimuli, every individual nerve cell 'determines' whether to transmit a stimulus. This is the way the cells (and thus the person) make decisions. Of the countless decisions made by a person each day, about 90% occur unconsciously. Because the brain 'selects' to create order and overview, people sometimes fail to see what is really happening, but instead see the interpretation of it. Our perception of the world is what our brain makes of it, not how the world really is. Unconscious decisions have more influence on a person's behavior than we think. It would be simply impossible to continuously consciously consider all the information in everything we do, so we don't. We continuously act upon assumptions and expectations which the automatic part of the brain sets in motion.

Everyone has beliefs and convictions, and thereby certain unconscious prejudices, about others. These prejudices are often positive about people that look like us and belong to the so called inner group. More negative are the prejudices about the people from outer groups.

Ins and outs

How the brain perceives the inner and outer group:

Inner group



Members are perceived as individuals

We accept differences

We particularly remember the positive facts

We remember individual contributions more easily

We work hard for each other

We are prepared to make sacrifices for each other

Evokes feelings of:

- Trust
- Being valuable
- Self-confidence
- Safety

Outer groups members as perceived by inner group members:



Members are perceived as homogenous who are stereotyped easily

We particularly remember the negative facts

We minimize the differences between outer group members and assign the same characteristics to all members

We easily forget individual contributions

We are less willing to help, let alone sacrifice ourselves for the sake of the group

We are less inclined to work hard for the group

Evokes feelings of:

- Agitation
- Distrust
- Uncertainty
- Hostility

This is by no mean willful intent nor reluctance, but the brain establishing connections. What does this all mean for diversity? A lot. Wherever in the world this phenomenon is investigated, no matter what culture or age; people unconsciously prefer people that look like them. That is, our brain causes us to select a candidate that is most similar to us, but that might not be the best candidate.

People are social animals; we all want to belong to a group. This group offers us protection and collaboration, which are both very important to an individual. Our social brain feels more at ease when it belongs to a group. Belongingness makes the brain less afraid and less vulnerable. When belonging to a certain group, one can take over a part of the group's identity. This also helps the brain, and therefore the person, to feel more secure. People that belong to a group they identify themselves with may differ a lot from one another but whatever is connecting them as a group is stronger than individual differences. Moreover, one does not really care about those differences. It is probable that one disapproves of certain behavior in general, but accepts or even condones that behavior when expressed by someone from their own group. While we perceive the people in our inner group as individuals, we are more inclined to stereotype people from the outer group. People from those outer groups look much more alike. Within the inner group of organizations, people share more information with each other about how to be successful. People that do not belong to the inner group are much more likely to miss out on that information and are therefore less likely to be successful. By thinking in inner and outer groups, our brain prevents diversity unintentionally and without us even noticing.

In order to really establish more diversity, there is more you need to know about the functioning of the brain. The human brain is comparable to fascinating software which encompasses magnificent possibilities but also errors. Mahzarin Banaji, professor of Social Ethics at Harvard University, calls these errors 'mindbugs'. Some examples of mindbugs:

People with a typical non-Western name are not highly educated
Employees that are 55 years old and older are quenched, tired, and inflexible

According to Mahzarin Banaji, realizing that having mindbugs is just human, can change the way we think and speak about it. We can talk about it without a sense of guilt but with a sense of solidarity with others and shared sense of responsibility to actually do something about it.

The most diverse elections (so far)

The US presidential elections of 2008 were extraordinary. For the very first time, a woman (Hillary Clinton) was a serious candidate for the US presidency, as was a black man (Barack Obama) and a 72-year old man (John McCain). All candidates had surrounded themselves with advisors to enhance their chances. Just like the other candidates, Obama was aided by the best scientists that experientially tested the voters' assumptions. The scientists studied the influence of Obama's skin color on the voters' behavior and provided Obama with the following advice: 'The majority of the voters makes its final decision during or after the big television debates. Even though the voters would declare to, above all, focus on the content, their eyes are

dominant. Just make sure you don't make any major mistakes during the TV debates and make sure that your face catches enough light in the studio so that you look like a half-white man. If the voters perceive you as a half-white man during the Democratic primaries, you will win.' Scientific tests namely proved that de American voters prefer a half-white man over a women to be president. After the primaries, the battle for presidency was between Obama and John McCain, the 72-year old Republican. All tests proved that John McCain didn't express enough vitality to be elected US president. There are rumors that Obama dyed his hair gray to give him some more authority. The rest is history...

Why dont you become an athlete?

Astrophysicist Neil DeGrasse Tyson is a well-known US scientist. Since he was 9 years old, he was fascinated by astrophysics. In 2005 he got tempted to respond to a question about the underrepresentation of women in science. Neil stated that he was not a woman but that he had been a colored man for all his life. His pursuit of becoming an astrophysicist had proven to be the path of the most resistance. At every step towards his goal, people openly wondered whether this was a good idea and why he would not just become an athlete or artist; something that's more suitable for a colored man. To be where

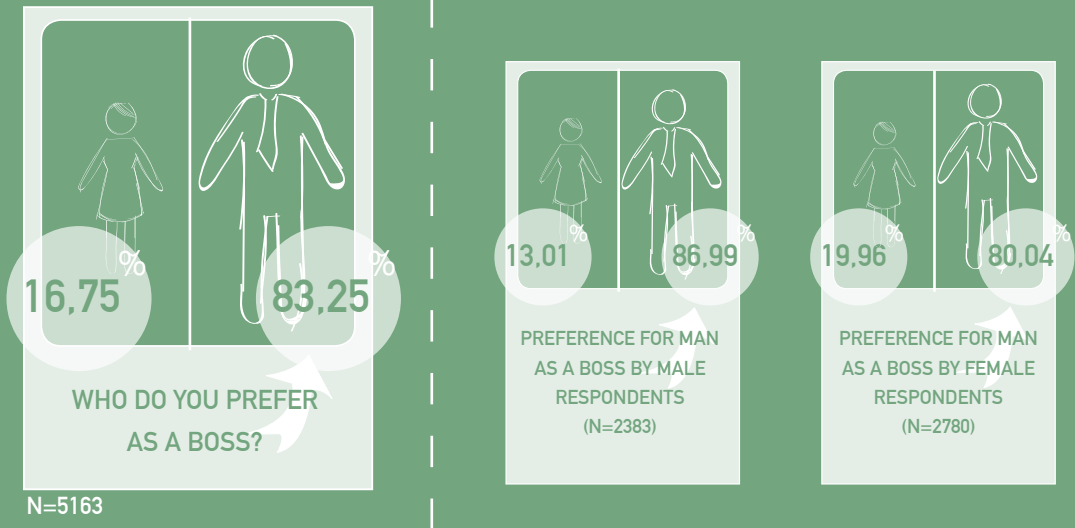
he is now, he had to overcome this every step of the way. Neil stated that, before we talk about genetic differences between men and women, we need to invent a system in which everyone really has equal opportunities. Furthermore, Neil stated: 'In my childhood I've never seen a black expert talking about anything other than black people. Black people could only know something about being black'. Therefore, Neil Degrass Tyson refuses to talk about his skin color in the media. Perhaps it is time to stop bothering women in top leading positions about their womanhood...

3

Mindbugs and managers

Direction's 'Female Leadership' training is a success. Individual women from all kinds of organizations participate in this training. We also provide in-company 'Female Leadership' trainings. In 2010, we asked the VU University to study the outcome of this training: does participating in this training actually enhance women's careers? Of all the participants, 30% took a next step in their career. The most remarkable finding, however, was that there were significant differences between organizations: what seemed to come easy for former participants in one organization, seemed to be quite difficult for former participants of another organization. Especially the results from the in company trainings appeared to vary considerably. In some organizations, providing women with focus and insight alone was not enough; we also had to start a dialogue with the decision-makers. Mahzarin Banaji inspired us with her research on mindbugs. At Direction, we developed a workshop for managers regarding unconscious prejudices. It appeared to be the key to a better understanding of the difficulties of diversity, and to actual solutions. In co-creation with Philips, a Dutch electronics company, we developed the Direction Mindbugstest which we now apply in almost every diversity workshop. The main goal of this test is for the participants to experience their own mindbugs and to show them how persistent mindbugs can sometimes be. Our test specifically focuses on gender and leadership, but mindbugs exist in all shapes and sizes. Of all the 5163 tested managers, just over 83% unconsciously prefers a man as a leader. Subsequently, only 17% unconsciously chooses a woman as a leader. Almost all of these managers state, earlier in the test, that they perceive men and women as equally competent to be successful leaders. They do not realize that in this subject the unconscious part of their brain has a different opinion.

Mindbugs in practice: Women also – unconsciously – prefer a man as a boss



Source: Direction Research 2015

100% more ideas for light innovations

Ruud Gal made excellent use of all the gathered data and facts in measuring the status quo of the teams and results of action plans. Because Lightlabs is an organization in which employees report their activities by means of time sheets, Gal could easily see who was having contact with whom. In his analysis, Gal marked the female names red and the male names black. He compared 2009, the year before Philips started working on diversity with Direction, to 2011. In 2009, inner groups were clearly visible: people who talked a lot to each other and worked on projects together. The majority of the women were not found in the midst of

these groups and the impact that they had on project teams and the ultimate result was highly questionable. There were a lot of meetings which they simply did not attend to. The comparable graphics of 2011, after increased attention on diversity and inclusion, showed that the majority of women had shifted towards the core of the groups. They were more involved and had greater impact. And yes, in 2011, this resulted in 100% more ideas for light innovations in comparison to 2009. Other groups of diverse talent also benefitted from this trend of increased cooperation.

Being oneself is what employees want the most

With a test to measure unconscious prejudices, the leaders of Philips Lightlabs, with front man Ruud Gal, aimed to achieve increased impact during the trainings. Philips created a test that could measure the opinions and unconscious preferences of individual managers and teams, which would ultimately instigate the dialogue about diversity. With this test, Philips Lightlabs effectuated a lot of success. The test and enhanced dialogue disclosed many of the unconscious preferences of the managers and employees. Also, the principles of the inner and outer groups became more visible. By discussing all the new insights, the culture within Philips Lightlabs became more transparent. Everyone loved it! The exploratory atmosphere that was present during the workshop transferred to the everyday work activities. The people sensed a positive friction, worked harder for each other, and new employees felt at ease more quickly. In this new culture, people could really be themselves. Generally the new

culture resulted in improved cooperation and a greater overall success for Philips Lightlabs. In the Philips Magazine, Gal stated: 'Diversity and leadership is often linked to the male-female ratio within a company, but is actually about creating a human-friendly culture in which everyone is deployed based on their strengths.' About the results, Gal said the following: 'During the sessions, we discovered that diversity is a key ingredient in establishing a constructive dialogue. The more diversity within a group, the more power within that group. In this new culture, more ways to develop talents and qualities arose. People were also more valued for their diverse talents and qualities. There was no longer any need for conforming. New employees got to know the organization quicker and more easily and therefore could be themselves.'

Leadership by self-awareness

One day I met an outspoken management team. There was only one single woman in the top 100 of this organization. Forced upon by the Supervisory Board, they were obliged to come up with an action plan regarding diversity. The management team expressed some clear statements: they strongly believed in diversity and would very much welcome a woman in their board, but there just weren't any suitable women. This was probably due to the type of industry in which they were employed. That particular industry was considered unattractive to women. In addition, the management team thought that Dutch women are just not ambitious enough: 'We all work fifty to sixty hours a week, women just don't want to do that'. We listened to all of their explanations and subsequently showed them their test results. They nodded their heads vigorously when they learned that all of them had stated to 'totally agree' with the idea that men and women are equally competent to be successful leaders. 'We told you ', they said, 'that we do not discriminate at all!' However, the team sniggered when we showed them that 75% of all the leadership qualities they had indicated to need and prefer, were actually female qualities. After that, we showed them the results of the Mindbugstest; where a new record was set. All of the seven board members unconsciously strongly preferred

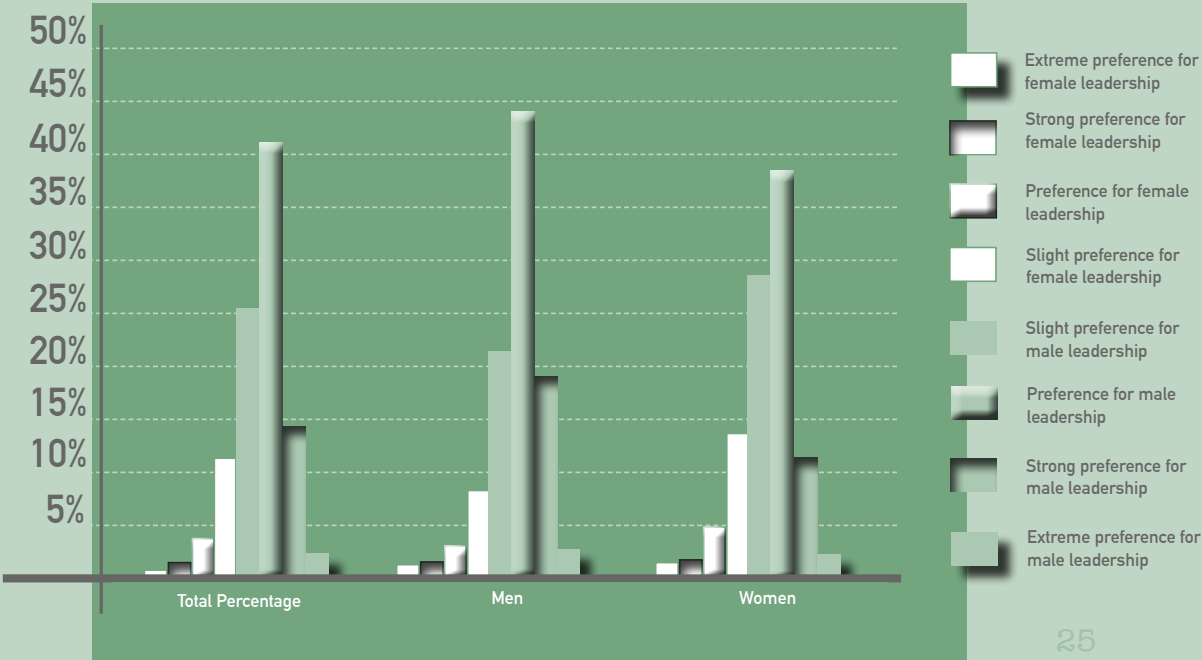
a man as their leader. There was not one deviant score. The following dialogue was about what needed to be done and how the team could challenge itself to make progress in this. Because more diversity within this team wouldn't simply happen overnight. If this team was to appoint its next leaders, women would not stand a chance. Subsequently, these leaders deprived themselves of the opportunity to 'collect' those qualities which they needed the most. We also talked about the fact that it's highly likely that there are a lot of suitable and knowledgeable women out there who can be a true asset. The results had shocked them, but had also set the tone. At that point they realized that they were the ones obstructing diversity. This insight was very helpful! We now know that at least one woman has since been nominated to become board member. Also, the team decided to throw the required minimum age of being a high potential overboard after learning about Zenger and Folkman's analysis. As a result, four women are now on the high potential list. I respect those managers who are willing to improve themselves. You can't do much about having mindbugs, but realizing that you have them and having the willingness and discipline to improve yourself, separates mediocre managers from true leaders.

Leadership preferences



Source: Direction Research 2015

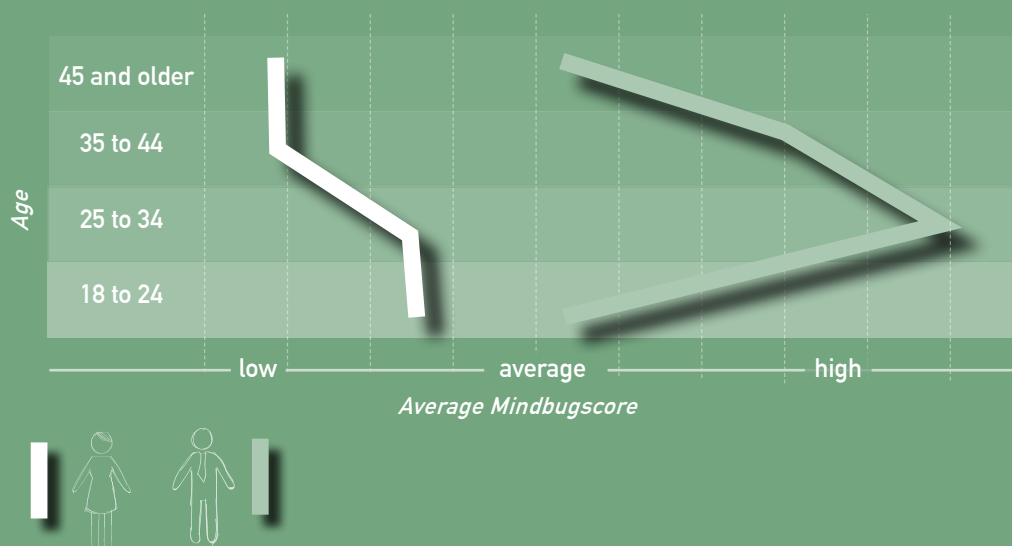
Overall, male leadership is preferred over female leadership... even by women



Source: Direction Research 2015

Young people think that having mindbugs in terms of men and women is a problem only existing among older generations, but our research revealed that the most tenacious mindbugs when it comes to leadership and gender is held by men between 25 and 34 years of age.

Young people tend to think that gender diversity is an issue that only applies to older generations, but our research shows that especially young men have a strong preference for male leadership.



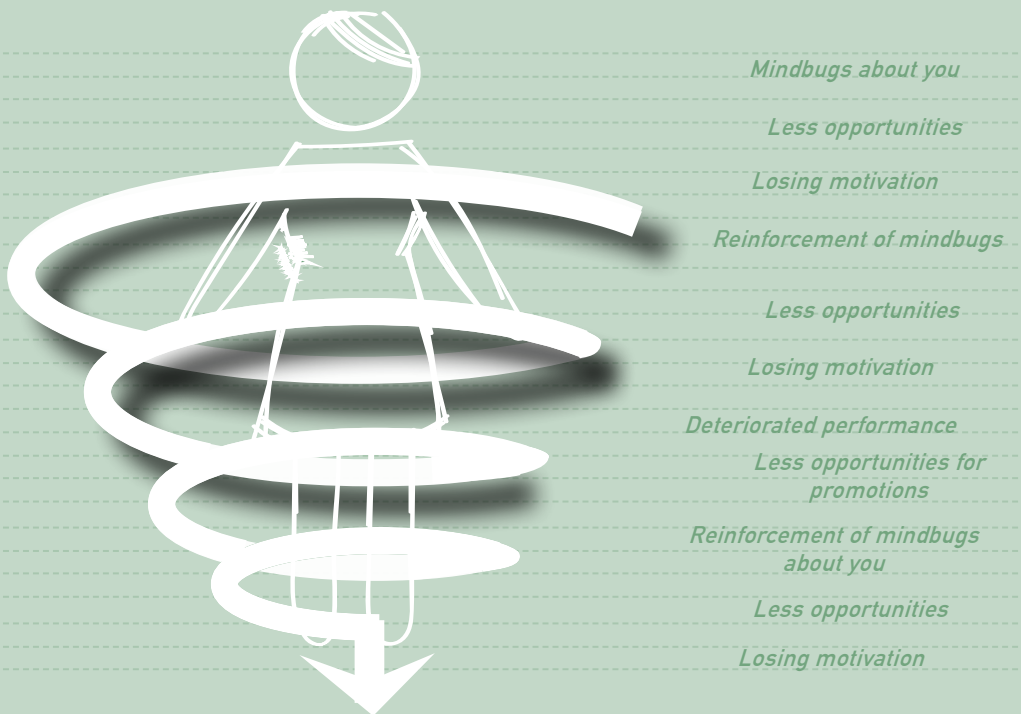
Source: Direction Research 2015

The key to success

The key to really establishing more diversity within organizations lies in our mindbugs. A multitude of obstacles that impede diversity are included in the unconscious, automatic parts of our brain. As a leader, you need to learn to recognize your own mindbugs, and teach others how to do that by making clear decisions.

A negative spiral (especially for an organization)

If a mindbug is about you (your manager says things like; 'I find your colleague, who also wants to get promoted, a bit more decisive than you'), it will affect your career possibilities, which might negatively affect your motivation, which subsequently might affect your performance and thus your career possibilities. This negative spiral is disastrous for diverse talent and organizations. We believe that women start to work less due to this very spiral.



But that's exactly what makes our job so boring...

We were training a group of recruiters on how to select diverse talent. These recruiters told us that they already knew a lot about biases and unconscious prejudices, and they wanted to start practicing right away. At the same time, we were also working together with the Honors Program of a Dutch university. This program included only the very best students who were selected based on their grades. It was a diverse group with a remarkably high number of women and non-western immigrants. We asked these students to participate in an exercise for recruiters and promised them that it would be a valuable experience for them as well. We asked the recruiters to have conversations with candidates of whom they had little to no background information. It was a complete disaster. The recruiters did not see their own mindbugs and turned down every candidate. They asked relatively general

questions, but the way they interpreted the candidate's answers, caused the recruiters to immediately dismiss each candidate, one by one. Recruiters based their (mis-) judgements on physical characteristics and suggestive questions ('Are you up for 60 hours of work a week?', 'Do you personally know someone who works at an organizations like this one?'). They interpreted the answers based on their own assumptions. After the candidates left, we showed the recruiters their resumes. Aside from a few exceptions, no one had realized that they were dealing with the very best students. It was a tough lesson, also for the students who left the training slightly disillusioned. The recruiters realized their error. We agreed that it is, apparently, very difficult to recognize your own mindbugs.

The assessment paradox

Years ago, when one was born into a working class family, one could not expect to climb the hierarchical ladder and become the director of a plant. The class system is long gone and we now live in a meritocracy: people are judged by their personal performances. The vast majority of the organizations we at Direction work with, use this system in which every manager reviews his or her employees by their personal performance. It is the managers' job to evaluate the results, development and potential of each employee. This is because we do not want gender, skin color, sexual orientation, or age to determine how someone is being rewarded and evaluated. This way of appraisal and assessment should decrease the differences between groups within organizations, however this is not the case. In fact, it is precisely in these types of organizations that men receive higher reviews and rewards than women. Again, without intentions. This entire review system was created precisely to be an honest system, which was also in the organization's best interest.

How it goes wrong (unintentionally)

In practice, this appraisal method has a different outcome than intended. The system itself facilitates differences. Appraisals are often based upon observations made by the manager during daily activities. This way of appraising people triggers us to disadvantage diverse talent. Our brain cannot objectively register all of a person's actions, since that would be a total overkill of information. The brain solves this problem by categorizing the employees: 'hardworking', 'ambitious', 'inaccurate', 'nice', 'bitchy'... From that moment the brain will respond to that stimulus, especially when the stimulus confirms a person's behavior that is consistent with the category. Subsequently, the halo-effect (positive) and horn-effect (negative) make sure to reinforce the initial perception; all following judgments will be based on the initial judgment. Meanwhile, the brain increases the differences. Neutral observation is an illusion. Managers who believe that they always observe correctly and objectively and think that they don't have mindbugs, are far less likely to analyze the accuracy of their impressions.

They will not critically question their own judgments. Therefore, this method goes horribly wrong when people that are untrained, undisciplined and unaware of mindbugs are responsible for the appraisals. In practice there is often a third factor that can worsen the outcome: time pressure. We have seen that the appraisals of managers who operate under time pressure are basically entirely brought about by the automatic parts of their brain. In short: this method was designed with the best intentions, but is based upon false assumptions.

Test: The Apple logo

Do you know the Apple logo? Most people will confidently say 'yes'. An apple with a single bite taken out. Do you really know it? How certain are you? A scientific research conducted by the University of California showed that the issue is a little more complicated than expected. The researchers asked 85 students (of which 90 percent used (an) Apple product(s)) to draw the Apple logo. According to tech-website DutchCowboys.nl, only seven percent drew the logo more or less correctly, whereas only one person drew the actual logo fully correctly. The message is that people think that they know what something looks like,

but, important elements and details of the object are in fact not saved by our brain. If we would fully consciously observe the logo, we'd remember and reproduce it better. But as long as we don't have to do that, our brain uses a more efficient way to save a thing into our memory: without remembering 'unnecessary details'. Anyone could probably think of a couple ways how this can work out in selecting and appraising employees. Where you right (without checking your iPhone)? Google it to check...

Wich one is the real one?





Leadership in diversity

the inclusive leader

4

The ins en outs of teams

Unconscious decision-making influences a team in many ways. For example, it determines whether we feel at home within the team and whether we perform fully. As a manager one should be aware of their actions with regard to their employees. Yet, everything cannot be perfect all the time, not everything is fun all the time, not all teams are great, and in a professional environment we expect people to be professional: reasonable, business-like, and rational. Our brain thinks otherwise. That is, our brain does not distinguish between work and private life. To our brain, work is a social interaction. The limbic system, the part in our brain that is involved with emotions, learning, motivation, memories, and sexual behavior, tries to avoid as much fear as possible and tries to enjoy as much pleasure as possible. In case of danger or threat, the brain responds immediately by producing stress-hormones. Managers often tell me that words such as 'danger' and 'threat' surely do not exist in their teams. But they actually do. According to a British study, 47% of the studied employees had (ever) experienced a sense of danger and threat imposed by their manager. As a leader, one should realize that they have a major influence on how the employees feel in that social interaction.

In every organization and in every team there are explicit and implicit rules about how people should behave. The explicit rules are, for instance, about being on time. The implicit rules, on the other hand, determine that important decisions are made in the corridors. What makes this so complicated, especially for the outer group members, is that the rules are not openly explained. It is expected of a member to simply know them.

The content of these rules differs per organization and sector, but there are several general rules which are to varying degrees present in all organizations. Whereas people who know the rules of the inner group...:

~ Strongly focus on people from the inner group that have more power and actively build good relationships with these people. In this process, they show a lot of respect for the organization's hierarchy

~ Understand that their job description describes their responsibilities, but also delimits them. They don't worry about everything that is going on in their department if that is not their responsibility. This allows them to spend enough time on networking and organizing informal decision-making within the inner group.

When the unwritten rules scare away your talents

Consultancy firm Bain & Company asked one thousand men and women from American companies two simple questions: 'Do you have the ambition to reach the top management of a large company?' and 'Do you believe that you can reach that level?', and it turned out that women who had less than two years of working experience appeared to be a little more ambitious than their male colleagues. But the longer the women were employed, the more their ambitions and confidence decreased,

with respectively fifty to sixty percent! This had nothing to do with whether or not they were married or a mother. Men also showed a small decrease, but of only ten percent. At senior manager level, the ambition and confidence of both men and women increased. However, the ambitions of the women never reached the 'junior' level; and their ambitions remained sixty percent lower than those of men... The researchers saw a clear explanation.

Company culture often shows that the leaders are only men who work day and night for the best results, who sacrifice everything for their careers, and are great at networking at the golf court.

Women do not typically relate to this, which subsequently causes a decrease in their faith of achieving their ambitions. This study also showed that young men and women feel supported by their managers with regard to their ambitions. However, whereas women feel twenty percent less supported after two years – men feel three percent less supported in the same time. Women stated that their managers were not aware of their ambitions, or did not know how to support them. Women also

stated that they received feedback such as ‘you’re not top management material’, or ‘you don’t really want it’. The researchers concluded that these companies do not sufficiently foster meaningful dialogues regarding careers and ambitions, and do not sufficiently encourage their employees. All employees and talents need this, but the researchers concluded that men receive more support than women. This is a missed opportunity, because both men and women want to work at an organization that is open to all kinds of talents. Employee engagement leads to better results and an increase in customer loyalty.

Unwritten rules provide the people who know them with an advantage. The inner group is often familiar with these unwritten rules. For diverse talent, who often belong to the outer group, it is much more difficult to figure these rules out. There is a world of difference between how it formally works and how it actually works. We at Direction think that being successful without knowing the unwritten rules is next to impossible.

The ins and outs

During one of our workshops we were challenged by a leader of large unit of multinationals; Benjamin. After we explained why the group should reconsider their unwritten rules and make them more transparent in order to become truly inclusive, Benjamin wholeheartedly stated: 'I disagree. For a couple of years, I have been a supporter of the servant leadership philosophy. I really want us leaders to be serving. This is essential for the development and survival of our organization. I don't want my people to talk about the old rules. I want us to focus on the new rules, which we make ourselves. A personal example to illustrate that this really works: During a recent meeting, I stood up. I put a stop to a meeting in which everyone was showing macho behavior and explained why this type of behavior is disastrous for our organization. Everyone was quiet and afterwards we had a really good discussion. I expect the same from the people in my team. They should move across inner group hierarchies and speak their minds. They will be heard'. We asked Benjamin how long he had been working at this multinational and how he had acquired his current position.

He told us that he had been working at the organization for over twenty years and that his superiors acknowledged his talents very early on in his career. Benjamin was recruited for this position because of his successful previous assignments. We asked the other employees whether they perceived Benjamin as a member of the inner group. All employees nodded their heads. Then we asked whether there was an inner group and an outer group within this team. Again, all employees agreed. We could tell by Benjamin's nonverbal reaction that he was having a hard time hearing this. The employees agreed that later entrants to this organization often belonged to the outer group. One of the employees participating in this workshop said: 'Within our management team, I could not have said the same thing you said, Benjamin. It would have not sat well with the team, let alone with you. Even though I have been working here for three years, I still don't really belong'. All the participants, including Benjamin, nodded their heads. The message was clear.

5

World leaders

In order to lead a diverse team, one has to understand cultural differences. Culture is another thing deeply imbedded in the brain. Of course, it is impossible to know every single cultural difference between the world's 195 countries, but certain awareness is necessary. David Pinto came up with a very useful categorization of cultures by dividing the world's cultures into two categories: the fine-grained (F) cultures and coarse-grained (C) cultures. All cultures lie between these two extremes: F-cultures have detailed and structured codes of conduct. For every situation, there are specific rules of engagement and communication. In these traditional, often non-western cultures, a person derives their identity from the group. Examples: China, Morocco, Turkey, Somalia. In C-cultures, people can determine their own rules for their own specific situation; there is a lot of individual freedom of choice. These are modern, often western cultures, where a person derives their identity from personal performances and qualities. Examples: United States, Sweden, France, the Netherlands. Whether an individual is more ascribed to the F- or the C-culture depends on four factors: welfare, religion, social environment and individual disposition. Development is possible in all four factors. To someone who was born and raised in a C-culture, such as a native Dutchman, that culture will be normal and natural. However, only eight percent of the entire world's population lives in a C-culture, such as the Dutch culture. This means that 92 percent of all the people is familiar to an F-culture. In Dutch organizations, talent is often selected on the basis of C-behavior: expressing ambitions and a strong opinion, and showing individual strengths. Nonetheless, the inner groups at the top of many Dutch organizations carry out an F-culture. You are a part of the group and you adapt yourself to it. There go the strengths, strong opinions and ambitions. In the inner group, the F-culture prevails: loyalty to group members, much respect, pride, avoiding conflicts, and accepting the systems rather than challenging them.

A three does not mean the same to me as it does to you

During one of our workshops we talked about cultural differences in appraisals. One of our participants, François, provided an excellent example. François capably leads a multicultural team. In the annual appraisals, he tried his best to look at his employees without mindbugs, as he did during one of our previous trainings. One and a half years previously, Li, with whom François had a good relationship, had joined the team. Together with his wife, Li had moved to the Netherlands for this job. Everything was going great, Li enjoyed working in this team and the team benefited from Li's expertise. François had to appraise his employees by ranking them on a scale from one to five. Just as the majority of the team, Li received a three. Li was upset and asked what he had done wrong. To François, a three meant that Li had done a good job in his first year and envisioned that in the next year, when Li would have come to understand the organization more comprehensively, Li would be more initiating. Li left the conversation downhearted and François was worried about Li's unjust dissatisfaction. François invited Li for a second conversation. During this conversation, François took his time to explain the appraisal system to Li and emphasized that, in the Netherlands a

three is nothing to be ashamed of. Li said that he was hoping for the highest score. From his cultural point of view, only the highest score is good enough. Anything below that doesn't really matter. During this conversation, both men came to learn and understand more about each other and really took the time to explain the different interpretations in their cultures to each other. At the end of the conversation, Li was relieved and stated that he now understood and accepted his three. The next day Li came back to François to ask him whether the letter which contained the appraisal could be sent to his office instead of to his home address. Li stated that his wife was still getting used to the Netherlands and that he could not yet explain the three to her. Would François help him in preventing a loss of face to Li's family by not sending the appraisal to the home address? François consented. Li and François form a good team and Li excelled in a way that made François rank him with four in the next appraisal. Li smiled and stated that he aims for a five in the next year, because he still aims for the highest attainable appraisal.

More bold – more confident – more brilliant

*



Manoel de Oliveira

Manoel de Oliveira, being 106 years old, he is the oldest movie director in the world. In 1937 he won the Formula 1 Grand Prix season, but after that he became a movie director. He won several awards also in the film industry and directed eleven movies after his ninetieth birthday



Rembrandt

Rembrandt van Rijn. In 2015, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam hosted a special exhibition of the Dutch painter's late work. According to a popular Dutch newspaper, NRC, 'The old Rembrandt had the courage to be free. In his late work, Rembrandt shows a loose, sensitive, and human side of himself. In his last years, Rembrandt changed his style radically. His brushstrokes became bigger, the daubs of paint became bolder. He was the first painter to use a palette knife. He painted rougher, expressed himself with fewer brushstrokes. More bold, more confident, more brilliant'

A British woman, **Ruth Flowers** decided to become a DJ when she was 79 years old. While organizing her grandson's birthday party, she discovered that she wanted to enjoy the energy that music brought to her life. She was specifically touched by the music of a young French producer; Aurélien Simon, who became Flowers' trainer and helped her with her image. In time Flowers found her own style in mixing music. She performed at the 2009 Cannes film festival, produced two singles and performed at Mamy Rock in London, Ibiza, Paris, New York, Los Angeles and Tokyo. She died in 2014 (aged 83)



In 2013 the 62 year old **Greta Pontarelli** won the world cup in pole dancing. When she was young she competed in national competitions as a gymnast. Pontarelli discovered pole dancing in 2010 when she was looking for a way of working out that would protect her from the consequences of osteoporosis. She is the oldest contestant ever to participate in the American Ninja Warriors

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*Attribution see references

6

The inclusive leader: leading without blinkers

Excellent performing teams always have a great leader. According to the HPO Center (which is connected to Direction), excellent performing organizations have thirty-five characteristics. Twenty-four of those characteristics are about leadership. A diverse team needs a leader who can handle differences excellently and can motivate the entire team to perform at its utmost best. Which leaders are capable of this? What are the most important characteristics of leaders that are inclusive and really make a difference?

I. Inner clarity

As a leader, to be genuinely interested in others, one needs to know themselves. A leader who knows his or her own unconscious steering, is a different leader from someone who does not know their own drives. A leader that has faced their own fears no longer lets themselves be guided by it. Facing your own fear results in self-knowledge, not in an increase in qualities. Self-knowledge creates options.

YOU WERE BORN TO BE REAL
NOT PERFECT

anonymous

A day without laughter is a day without leadership

Research shows that good leaders laugh more than mediocre leaders. Leaders that have a sense of humor are more relaxed, can put things better into perspective, are more flexible and creative, and are better at coping with stress. Leaders that can laugh about themselves or about difficult situations are perceived as more approachable. They also allow others to be funny. And last but not least: they earn more money. That's not a joke. But let's be clear; what's funny to me might not be funny at all to you. Especially within a diverse team, it is important to be aware of and talk about

that, and to establish common guide lines. This will make it easier for people to say: 'I don't think this is funny at all, I'm actually offended by it'. As a leader, one can employ self-mockery in situations in which they feel comfortable and self-confident; situations in which people can't question capabilities. Self-mockery should be employed with caution (particularly when one is not a member of the inner group), especially whenever there's reason to think that people, due to their mindbugs, unconsciously have questioned your capabilities in the past...

2. Focus on empathy: survival of the kindest

Profit maximization brings about too little conscience. It makes us greedy, too greedy. For too long organizations thought that everything was permitted in order to earn money, as long as there was no actual rule that prohibited it. Nowadays, greed is 'out of fashion', whereas empathy is 'in fashion', and that is exactly what is needed to give the world and organizations a new focus. It should be about the actual calling of the organization.

3. Know your calling: why do you sell something?

With their calling, an organization explains what it wants to do and, especially, what it doesn't want to do. A good calling of an organization is unique, distinctive, timeless, and is not continuously questioned. It displays what the organization wants to mean to the outside world and how it is to be achieved.

Observations of a headhunter: women unconsciously do not want a top leading position

The other day I spoke with an international headhunter who knows the territories in which we operate, and therefore shared the following observation with us: Very often, women are being rejected a top leading position at the very last moment. The headhunter suspected more and more that, as the selection procedure progresses, women start to realize something. They realize that they do not relate to the current masculine norms and values of an organization, such as profit maximization and the expansion of the market share, instead they are customer driven and devoted to delivering excellent products or services. As a member of the management one can express their opinion and vision, but as a CEO one has to represent the current norms and values. According to the headhunter, during the selection procedure women find out that they do not want to be the spokesperson of those norms and values, and their network is not strong

enough to change the old values. She experienced that women do not put the perceived differences in norms and values forth, but underperform in their interviews. After all, they become less passionate and will show more hesitation. Subsequently, these women are not selected for the position. Becoming aware of this presumably unconscious process can help women in recognizing and addressing this, and therefore also in starting a dialogue. This will enable women to truly improve organizations and to achieve top leading positions.

Unilever wants to become greener

Unilever, a multinational in the food, personal care and cleaning products industry, is one the organizations that has brought their leadership development to a higher level. Leaders investigated their fears and discovered their vulnerabilities. Kees van der Graaf, former President Europe at Unilever, provides an insight in his personal quest for development as a leader in his book 'Defining Moments: What Every Leader Should Know about Balancing Life'. His quest and those of other Unilever-leaders made way for different conversations, vulnerable conversations that brought about a great change at Unilever. Nowadays, Unilever is an organization that takes a stand and sets different goals. As a company, Unilever wants to double in size and at the same time decrease its ecological footprint and increase its positive impact on society. Unilever's CEO Paul Polman says, 'We can't close our eyes to the challenges that the world faces. In tackling them, organizations should contribute in an explicit and positive way. I am convinced that, by doing that, we can create a more just and more sustainable world for all of us'. Step by step, the people of Unilever work to achieve these goals. In 2013, the Co2 emissions of the company's own factories were 32% lower

compared to the same in 2008, the total amount of disposed waste decreased by 66%, whereas water extraction decreased by 29%. The company also developed numerous awareness campaigns for consumers. For example, body care brand Dove does not use models but 'real' women in its ads and supports the Dove Self Esteem Fund for young women. Analysts keep asking about the effects of these actions but veritably fail to see Unilever's calling. And now an organization such Unilever, that until recently merely focused on profit maximization, resigns from the European employers association due to dissatisfaction regarding the anti-green lobby. Unilever wants to become greener. In the Netherlands, Unilever is the company with the most women in top management. Insight in own leadership and mission brought the understanding that diversity contributes to challenging and achieving goals.

7

Real inclusiveness in your team

We now know that in order to build diverse teams, and thereby increase an organization's strengths, one needs to tackle their mindbugs. But how is it done? The simplest solution would be to erase all mindbugs. Unfortunately, our mindbugs are products of thousands of years of evolution and can therefore not be just wiped away. So we are looking for ways to learn how to look and appreciate, despite our mindbugs. Not easy, but not impossible. What can a manager do to make his or her team more inclusive for everyone?

Zoom in on the differences: how do employees cope with feedback?

Now that we know how our brain works, we know that we don't have to try so hard to understand the employees that look like us. But one also needs to comprehensively understand their other employees and appreciate the differences, if they want to build a high performance team. For example, it is important to know that men and women give, receive, and cope with feedback in different ways. Employees from F-cultures often have a hard time interpreting a C-culture leader's message correctly, and vice versa. Besides being truly interested in the differences between groups, one should also find a way to make full use of these differences. One should make sure to also always hear the opinions of the minority and discuss deviant viewpoints. Seriously considering deviant opinions leads to better group decisions. Moreover, taking the people with deviant viewpoints seriously makes them feel heard.

Keep it manageable: one hundred and fifty people is the max

Organizations should be kept clear and simple. No need to give the brain and that of the employees too much of a hard time. We're just not built to function in huge groups.

3.



Set a good example

Great news: as soon as we set a good example, the brains of people will help us. That is, the human brain contains mirror neurons that pick up and copy skills and behavior. Mirror neurons play an important role in understanding others and learning about behavior.



4.



Pay a lot of attention to new employees

In order to guarantee new employee's success, almost all organizations should support them more than they do now. Most organizations state to believe that new employees will naturally find their way within the organization. To women, nonwestern immigrants, and other people that do not easily fit into the inner group, this will be a lot more difficult, for example because they are less likely to receive help from mentors and sponsors. As a leader, one should make sure that there is an unambiguous welcome program in which new employees get familiar with the ins and outs of the job and functioning within the team.

5. →

Be compassionate

Steering softly is often more effective than steering the hard way. If the culture within the organization inhibits that mistakes should be covered up instead of admitted, one should make compliments to the person that made a mistake and admitted it. Should the manager directly disapprove of the mistake and show their disapproval and perhaps even anger, the employee is likely to decide not to ever admit a mistake again. Taking true interest in ways of supporting diverse talent within the team, the manager encourages the employees to open up.

6. →

Move from feedback to feed forward

Feedback judges a person on its differences, its deviation from the norm. The human brain can't deal with that. It only hears the negative words, consider them threatening and subsequently goes on a defense. We have experienced that providing feed forward is better than providing feedback. Feed forward has a positive approach, it addresses someone's qualities and helps people in determining how to make the best contribution to the team.

7. →

Address the intrinsic motivation

Managers should make sure that they know the employees' drives and encourage them to fully address them and protect them from intrinsic stimuli that might jeopardize this.

8. →

Visualize an image of the future with employees

Just as athletes visualize their competitions, managers can visualize their future actions and practice them. Managers should take time to discuss what they want to accomplish with the team. How diverse will the team be in two years, how the team members should treat and help each other. By visualization, the future is taken to the present and the transition will be easier and more likely.

9. →

Move from 'mind full' to 'mindful'

A full mind has a great impact on the way we function. Whenever we experience stress, our brain activates hormones like cortisol and adrenalin.

In the best case scenario these hormones allow us to react quick, in the worst case scenario they limit our attention which will consequently only focus on the source of the stress – not on the task that needs to be done. This can be tackled by practicing mindfulness.

10.

Provide training

Managers are recommended to invest in creating awareness regarding mindbugs and the way the brain works. Besides a general awareness training, it is also important that appraisers and selectors of employees learn how to deal with mindbugs. Trainings that are aimed at helping groups to become more inclusive – dialogue training, workshops in which people are challenged to get to know each other on a deeper level, workshops in which the unwritten rules of the organization are examined and discussed and, subsequently, new behavior is discussed – provide an acceleration in the process of establishing a diverse team in which everyone feels at home and can perform optimally.

11.

Aim for growth!

Some people believe that their talents and abilities are given, stable, unchangeable traits. This 'fixed mindset' can limit people in their success. People with a 'growth mindset', on the contrary, believe that their talents and abilities can be developed by training, education and perseverance. The best strategy is not simply to employ the most capable people, but to find people that have a growth mindset.

Taxi drivers prove it: we can change our brain

In order to maintain the high quality of the London taxi services, taxi drivers are obligated to pass the notorious exam called 'The Knowledge of London' or in short 'The Knowledge'. Taxi drivers must know all (!) of London's streets, routes and junctions by heart. This requires a tremendous preparation and continuous practice of the memory. And guess what? Scientists have discovered that London taxi drivers have an enlarged hippocampus (the great 'navigator' in our

heads). Scans showed that by training their memory so thoroughly, the parts of the brain that are used genuinely grow. When people realize that training and learning can actually transform their brain, they can take on a growth mindset.

12.

Support and guide growth and innovation

Leaders that possess a growth mindset focus not on the result but on the process. They detect struggles because these symbolize growth. They don't say 'we did not succeed', but 'we haven't succeeded yet'. To eliminate any misunderstandings – the growth mindset is not super relaxed and laid-back: people are very committed to achieving results, but they don't solely focus on it. Becoming a little bit better every day is just as satisfying for the brain as helping others becoming a bit better every day.



Success in diversity

actions that will make
a difference

8

Measuring is knowledge

*‘People who say
‘it cannot be done’, should not
interrupt those who are doing it.’*

George Bernard Shaw

Everything starts with facts. Truly effective diversity policies that bring about actual results are based on facts. Also, these policies are based on the agreement that when these facts show large differences, actions to eliminate these differences are taken. One should measure the mindbugs of an organization at recruitment, promotions, and outflow; in appraisals and salaries, at every level. Take advantage of the fact that all the data of women is at disposal. Analyze and monitor this. While this can be done relatively easily, collecting data of other groups will be much more difficult. It is good to try and do so, because eliminating differences between men and women will benefit other groups too. Some matters that can be measured:

1. Information about the client

Who are the clients and what are their backgrounds? Are the organizations employees right for serving these clients?

2. Open applications

Who voluntarily applies to work at the organization? What groups of talents are less attracted to the organization? What does this say about the reputation of the organization?

3. Applications to job vacancies

Who applies to any job vacancies? What does this say about the way the vacancies are presented?

4. Selection of candidates

Which candidates are invited for interviews? What does this say about the procedures of selection? What does this say about the selectors?

5. Candidates who withdraw from the procedure

Who are they? What does this say about how they experience the organization and the selection process?

6. Selection and choice

Who are selected? What does this say about the appraisals and decisions?

7. Offers

What is offered to the candidates? Which primary and secondary conditions are offered? Are there groups that receive more or less?

8. Appraisals

How do the groups perform according to the annual appraisal? Are there groups that perform better or worse? What does this say about inclusion within the organization?

9. Promotions

Which employees are promoted in what time? Are there differences between groups?

10. Participation in training and development programs

Which employees participate?

11. Exits

Which employees exit the organization?

12. Appraisal policy

Are there differences in appraisals between groups within the same function?

From disbelief to action

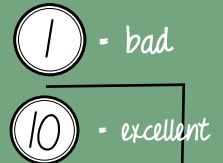
In the Netherlands, women earn 17% less than men in the same job position. That's a lot! Compared to other European countries, the difference is bigger in the Netherlands. A lot of research has been conducted on why these differences exist. An important reason is that, currently, men often have more years of experience than women, which is taken into account in the salary increase. That difference will decrease and eventually disappear in the following decennia. Also, women more often work part time than men, and they negotiate less (thoroughly) than men. But a large part of that difference – 8% - remains unaccounted for. Very few people will deliberately make a distinction between men and women when it comes to salary, but mindbugs do! Fortunately, more and more companies map out and analyze their reward systems. About 60% of the management teams we at Direction work with agree to participate in such a study with the statement: 'Those differences will be marginal in our organization', to find out after the study that those differences are actually rather big... There is disbelief when we discuss the facts together, which often turns into indignation when we illuminate the

individual differences. This happens when a management team understands that among their employees are excellent performing women, upon whom the organization heavily relies, who earn a lot less money than some mediocre performing male employees. The teams find this to be unacceptable. They quickly give the order to take measures that will eliminate these differences over time. We often agree to monitor these differences, because without proper attention these differences can come back.

Checklist

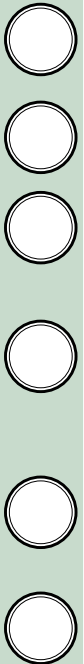
Selecting inclusively

Selecting inclusively; picking the most qualified person? The following checklist can be used to check whether, and how, an organization can improve their selection procedure. Meet up with your team and have every team member reviews the following statements (individually) by assigning a grade between 1 (very bad) and 10 (excellent).



1 Defining the requirements and competencies of the job position

- Our job requirements are as specific as possible. We know very clearly what we are looking for. Our requirements, such as minimum work experience required for the positions, are determined and are standardized to foster objectivity
- The described responsibilities are accurate and clear
- The terms and conditions are predetermined
- The recruitment text is inclusive and attractive. It is like an invitation to a person who thinks they can add value to our company, to come and introduce themselves to us; rather than a list of requirements ('we ask', 'you have', 'you are'). Our message addresses a large group of people and potentially qualified candidates do not feel left out
- For the purpose of writing the recruitment text, all team members were actively invited to provide input. Every member takes a look at the text
- A diverse team (background, age, gender) writes and reviews the recruitment text





- bad

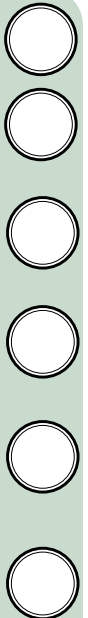


- excellent

2

Selection of the candidates

- We have not 'secretly' picked out our favorite candidate yet
- We attentively and openly listen to the suggestions of colleagues and/or recruiters about possible candidates. If candidates meet the requirements, we take them into account
- Whenever needed, we cooperate with specialized recruiters to find diverse talent. Diverse talent is not always present in recruiters' catalogues
- We have targets when it comes to female and nonwestern immigrant (or other specific groups) candidates
- We do our utmost best to fill a job vacancy with a woman or a candidate with a nonwestern background (or other specific groups) from within the organization. Our procedure specifically aims to find and select diverse candidates that meet the requirements
- On a regular basis, we measure and monitor the outcomes of the selection of diverse talent compared to other candidates and take adjusting measures when needed



3

Evaluation of job requirements per candidate

- We remove personal information (gender, first and surname, age, country of birth) from the resumes to prevent our brain to automatic reactions
- We score the qualifications of the candidates in a spreadsheet in which the outcomes are anonymously saved. We agreed to only invite the candidates with the highest scores and do not make exceptions on that matter
- We judge every candidate by the same standards
- On a regular basis, we measure and monitor the outcomes of the evaluations of diverse talent compared to other candidates and take adjusting measures to prevent variations in the evaluations



4

Dealing with candidates during interviews

- We treat everyone equally and have clear agreements about this. All candidates are asked the same open questions and given as much time
- The interviewing team is balanced in terms of composition
- All selectors are trained to be alert in terms of mindbugs and have discussed these mindbugs within their team
- We introduce our company as an organization in which diverse talent is welcome
- We under no circumstance ask questions that are out of line (example: 'do you intent to have children')
- On a regular basis, we measure and monitor the outcomes of selection interviews with diverse talent compared to those with other candidates, and take adjusting measures to exclude different outcomes between different groups



5

Evaluation of ambitions and interest in the vacant position

- We are aware of the fact that there are no groups that have higher or lower ambitions, and that ambition is an individual aspect
- We know that different groups express their ambitions in different ways
- We are aware of the fact that people who claim to be very ambitious, are not always that ambitious
- We know that not all candidates that work full time, are very ambitious
- We take candidates that want to work part-time into account. We do not exclude them in advance
- On a regular basis, we measure and monitor the outcomes of the ambition assessment made by assessors of diverse talent, and compare these to other candidates. Also, we take adjusting measures to prevent variations in the evaluations



6

Offer

- All candidates are offered the same primary and secondary conditions
- We give people with a part-time contract a fair workload
- The competency scores form the basis for salary negotiations, increases are discussed within a diverse group of people who had training on mindbugs
- On a regular basis, we measure and monitor the outcomes of the negotiations with diverse talent compared to those with other candidates, and take adjusting measures if there are differences



After you have checked all statements, meet up with your team to discuss the results. Are there differences? What can we do?

1. What went well? (highest average grade)
2. What should be improved? (lowest average grade)
3. What do we have to change to improve the worst graded aspects?
4. How are we going to do that? Who takes the lead?
5. What are the deadlines?
6. How are we, as team, going to realize and monitor this?

Use a flip chart to mark everyone's grades per statement.

Just make success happen: the story of EY

EY, the Netherlands, proves that with a specific focus and actions, great success can be achieved in diversity. In 2005, of the Big Four consultancy organizations, EY had by far the least women in senior management positions. Their top management told us that a career in their organization required utter commitment to the job and that this just didn't suit women, especially when they were starting a family. Nowadays, the top at EY the Netherlands looks completely different. Three women occupy a position in the highest level, the SALT. EY now has the highest amount of female partners of the Big Four. Diversity manager Monic Zents: 'We have a global scope and still set new goals. When it comes to the percentage of female partners, we have a lower score than for example Turkey, where 35% of the partners are female. There still is a lot of work to be done, but we've made great progress. In 2005, we started programs for women which we now use for talented ethnic minorities. Our next step is more inclusiveness'.

To me, EY is one of the best examples within the Netherlands when it comes to helping employees in eliminating mindbugs. EY achieved successes with its diversity policy by taking concrete measures. Some examples of those measures:

Proportional promotion

Are 30% of a group of managers female? At EY, this means that of all the promotions to a next level (senior management for example) 30% needs to be assigned to women as well.'

Percentage of inflow

EY closely monitors the facts and figures about the inflow of new employees. From the inflow at entry level (nowadays also later entries) up to management level, 50% needs to be women, at senior management level 35%, and at partner level 25%.

Committees

Within the committees that decide about appointments, 30% of the committee members have to be women. That's enough to start a different dialogue.

Appraisals

Nowadays, there usually is a partner of another group present at the appraisals of the employees. He or she pays close attention to possible mindbugs, when it comes to diversity. This person may interrupt whenever he or she suspects the presence of mindbugs. Women and ethnic minority talents benefit from this in their appraisals.

Monitoring appraisals of groups

For years now, EY has been having the agreement that differences in appraisals between men and women are not allowed. There were, however, large differences between some groups. To tackle this, EY built in an obligatory tool that is used to check the ratios in the given appraisals. This tool enables a HR employee to give direct feedback and request a reconsideration.

Training

EY encourages trainings regarding mindbugs in all teams. Within the groups that deal with large differences, this training is obligatory.

9

No change without courage

It takes courage to achieve actual change. As a leader, one needs to have courage in all stages in order to, after assessing the facts, initiate actions and maintain the new course. What can you do?

1. Dare to appoint

If you, just like those other 94.6% of all managers, believe that men and women are equally competent to be leaders, then just appoint women. This is the only thing that counts.

It starts with the leader

How does EY show courage in its diversity policy? The initiative for change came from former chairman Pieter Jongstra, in the words of Monic Zents: 'He showed vision and courage. He personally made way for women in the SALT. Michèle Hagens, the first female partner in our assurance service line, is now also in the SALT. He just did it.

He did not choose women that looked a lot like men, nor the calibrated skirt suit-types. The leading ladies of EY are outspoken, quite flamboyant and certainly no plane janes."

2. Eight tips for successful selection

Being aware of your mindbugs, you can think of specific measures that can be taken to neutralize them. Take a look at the following measures and make decisions that are suitable for neutralizing your mindbugs:

1. Making sure the selectors are also aware of their mindbugs
2. Determining the assessment criteria in advance, and not departing from it
3. Measuring the criteria as objectively as possible
4. Determining the structure of the interview questions in advance
5. Being patient
6. Compiling the interviews with somebody else, and agreeing on how to minimize mindbugs during the interview
7. Letting the assessors, after the interviews, say out loud why they find somebody qualified or unqualified
8. Making sure to always measure the selection and assessment results, also over periods of time

Invisible hurdles and pitfalls

There are a lot of mental leaps one can take during selection procedures and development discussions. Some examples:

Personal bias: *taking an unimportant aspect regarding the job position into account: personality, way of life, appearance*

Warm body syndrome: *appointing someone as quick as possible, regardless of the actual person, to get rid of the problem*

3. Shake up the team

If the brain perceives something as a group norm, it will accept this and act upon it. That person will, however, maintain its solid mindbug regarding people from outside the group, but not regarding the people within the group. This advocates a merger between groups for the sake of diversity, and to provide the new groups with a clear task. This is a good way to establish more diversity because it could also happen when an organization hires new people.

4. Enlarge the inner group

By opening up the inner group to diverse talent, the leader creates a lot of opportunities for them. There are several ways in which an inner group can be enlarged:

A Just do it!

You decide to look for diverse talent yourself. Talented people you want to help become more successful within the organization

B Turn the mentor program into a sponsor program

Mentors merely focus on reflection. Sponsors are more active; they liaise informal contact which does not specifically focus on dialogue, but on helping others by deploying their own network.

C Start a top talent program

Supervised and supported by the board, during a given period of time, the group works on strategic assignments of which the outcomes are to be presented to the board. The talents form a team and get to know each other intensively and might form the inner group of the next generation; the board keeps close contact with the group and recognizes the potential of the talents. Board members act as sponsors and coaches for the talents.

5. Make unwritten rules transparent and share them

Make sure that everyone in your organization learns the unwritten rules. During our trainings we provide our participants with a brief assignment in which the participants answer the following questions:

- *What does 'being successful' within our team/organization mean?*
- *When do you get a promotion within our team/organization?*
- *What do we mean by 'delivering quality' within our team/organization?*

ABN AMRO: We make it very concrete

Head of diversity and inclusion Yelly Weidenaar at ABN AMRO, a large Dutch bank, is convinced: in 2020, 30% of all senior management positions will be occupied by women. Weidenaar: 'I'm sure we will reach that goal. We have found the right switches and buttons'. ABN AMRO is a great example of an organization that first mainly focused on gender diversity and now employs the successful program interventions for all kinds of diversity, such as cultural background, age, and occupational disabilities. The model of commitment, awareness and empowerment that ABN AMRO, which was originally designed to promote women, has also proved to be beneficial for other groups of talents.

Continuous research

When Weidenaar and her team were appointed in 2011, ABN AMRO already placed great value on diversity but the facts and figures showed otherwise. The percentage of women at the top level dropped to an all-time low of 14.9%. This had to change. 'When we started as the new diversity team, we first talked to a lot of companies to find the Holy Grail in diversity. But we quickly discovered that every company culture is different from the other and that there is no single right way. As a financial service, ABN

AMRO is a very rational company. Facts and figures are important to us, we gain our knowledge by measuring. As a team, we decided to investigate and measure everything we did. One of our findings was that (in correspondence with the Direction research) 95% of our employees believes that diversity truly adds value to our organization. Over two-thirds of our employees is also convinced that more diversity makes us more successful.'

Dashboard for diversity

Weidenaar's team is small but effective. Together, they make sure that the subject of diversity remains under constant attention. They do this in several ways: trainings for managers, meetings for diverse groups of talents, a big yearly event, the magazine MIX which is produced by professionals and a highly motivated Diversity Board.

Having ambition, showing ambition

Another intervention that really works is a measure ABN AMRO took when research showed that most women within the organization were very ambitious. 'A lot more ambitious than people presumed. But women express their ambitions a little less proactively. Nowadays, we make sure that when

there is a job position which we want to appoint to a woman, and you are a female employee at ABN AMRO that is qualified for the position, you get notified by email. Hereby, we stimulate ambitious women to actually express their ambitions and help them to accelerate their careers'.

Everyone brings diversity

ABN AMRO started by putting gender diversity on the map, but is now an initiator for all kinds of diversity. They

introduce targets and aim for more culturally diverse talent, and for people with an occupational disability, LGBT's and for more cooperation between, and mobility of, generations.

10

Staying on track

In order to become and remain decisive regarding diversity, clear goals need to be set and achieved. There are several ways to nurture this:

- Making sure that the set goals are accomplishable
- Not assigning too many actions at once, but selecting the ones to focus on. These should be the ones that have the most impact and can really make a difference. It's also important to expand those actions
- Taking decisive actions whenever managers do not keep to the agreements

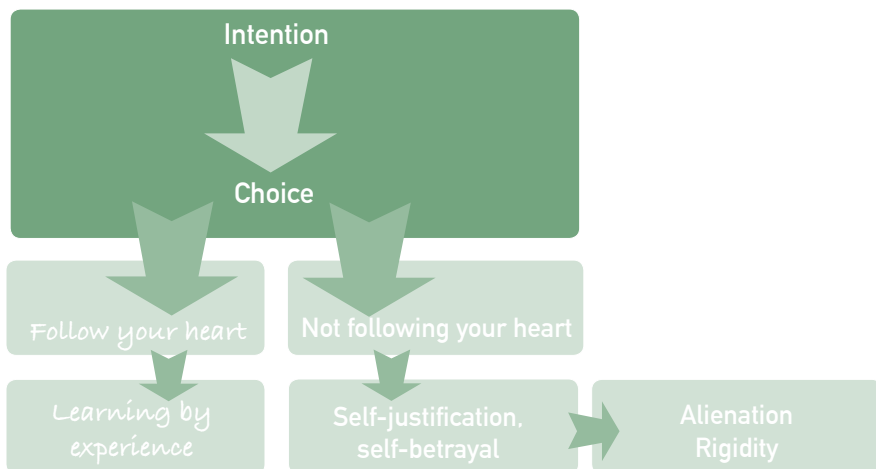
And yes, we want the turnover and profit on the short term, and the leadership to develop excellently performing, diverse teams on the medium term. You can't pick either one of them, we expect both from leaders! We recommend establishing clear agreements and guidelines on the behavioral level, so that everybody will know which behavior is acceptable and which is not.



Bonus

Personal leadership: tips for talent

In this section we want to show what can be done when a person has mindbugs about... themselves. Because that happens too. We have experienced that women often have the mindbug that 'the' leader is a man. You can train yourself on this too. At Direction, we have been training talented women and people from diverse backgrounds who want to take matters into their own hands when it comes to their ambitions. We would like to share the most important insights with all women, other diverse talent, and – everyone, actually.



Source: Arbing Institute

1. Compassion with yourself

It's an ancient wisdom: you have to know yourself before you can really get to know someone else. Who am I? This raises the question whether you can accept who you really are along with all the good and bad. It is important to learn that you just are who you are, and that you are good enough. What you need is self-compassion which, according to Kristin Neff (associate professor at the University of Texas) consists of three elements:

- **Being kind to yourself:** Being warm, gentle, and understanding to ourselves when we are hurting, failing or feeling like we are not good enough rather than ignoring our pain or punishing ourselves with self-criticism.

- **Acknowledging your humanity:** Seeing our experiences as a part of the greater experience of being human, which makes one feel connected to others, rather than seeing one's experiences as something that isolates them and distinguishes them from others.

- **Mindfulness:** Being present in the present, accepting painful thoughts and feelings without identifying with them. Meaning: taking a broader perspective.

2. Investigating your motivation and developing a vision on your career

*'Don't ask what the world needs.
Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it.
Because what the world needs
is people who have come alive'*

Howard Thurman

What about you? Truly ask yourself whether you are passionate about your job and whether that job and your career path still match with that passion. Stop repeating the past, start rehearsing the future. Take a good look at that passion. What part of that passion inhibits your happiness? What could you do with that, starting today?

3. Commitment to private life: choose the boss, not the job

We advise people to specifically choose a manager or supervisor that will actively help and support them in their career. A manager that stimulates them to address their calling in their career and life.

4. Playing the game

In this book, we appeal the leaders to call the written and unwritten rules into question with the purpose of making the organization more inclusive. This is no longer just socially desirable; it is imperative to remain an attractive organization to all its talents. But as a diverse talent, it is important to know the current rules and the leeway.

The third circle: the circle of power

Business expert Erna Versteegden, who works for Direction and the Changery, operates as an advisor to many organizations when it comes to diversity, change processes and operations. She introduced a, especially for women important, third circle in Stephen Covey's well-known circles of concern and influence. This third circle is especially important for women. Although we all worry about a lot of things: our health, our careers, the weather, our manager, our mortgage and salary, whether other's like us, senseless violence, problems in the healthcare sector, the situation in the world,... Covey calls this area the 'circle of concern'. There is only so much we can do about the majority of things we worry about, but we can do something about some things: that is covered by the 'circle of influence'. Proactive people mainly

focus on the circle of influence. When you, for example, worry about the quality of education, you can become an active member of the participation council of a school board. Hereby, your circle of influence becomes bigger. Reactive people, on the other hand, mainly focus on the circle of concern. They often blame others and feel victimized. They pay too little attention to what they can influence. Their circle of influence becomes smaller.

From influence to power

points out that adding a third circle is especially important to women: the 'circle of responsibility and power'. Nothing is as influential as formal power. Within the game in organizations, men understand this perfectly. In general, we see in women

that the circle of concern is bigger than the circle of influence, let alone the circle of power. In a complementary position, one can exert a lot of influence, if and when they are in the right place. In order to change something, one can choose the path of influence. Often this is an indirect or informal path. You can achieve whatever you want. When you are the one in power, you can make things happen and make things change. Women worry about things they can't change more often than men and this makes them feel powerless, angry, frustrated, or even sick. They pour too much energy into their large circle of concern, at the expense of their circle of influence. In general, women perceive 'influence' as a 'big thing' and back away from taking formal power. But this form of power is the ultimate, and easiest, way of proactive behavior. We therefore advise women to spend more energy on changing themselves and their position, rather than on changing the world. It is important for women to realize what they spend most of their energy on. By drawing their circle of concern, they can take a step back from the things that are not their business. By saying out loud and writing down what is in their circle of influence, they can pay more attention to this, adopt the right focus and map out the steps in creating a circle of power. In the next example we describe a reactive and proactive attitude of a woman who just had to endure a major setback in her career.

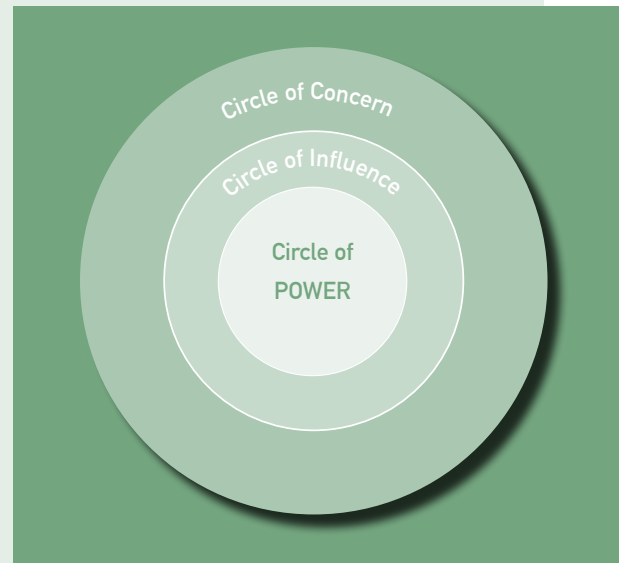
What strategy should Jane adopt in order to increase her circle of power?

Reactive:

Jane is upset. She is disappointed because she did not get promoted to be a manager and she doesn't understand why. Tom, who has a lot less experience, got the job. She doubts her capabilities and her career.

Proactive:

Today, Jane is less cheerful than usual because her colleague Tom got the job she wanted. She directly asked her boss why she did not get the job. He told her that Tom has better leadership abilities. 'It appears that I have to work on that,' says Jane. She has made an appointment with her manager to talk about the possibilities to develop her leadership qualities which will enable her to get promoted.



5. Choosing your partner with your heart – and your head

In the big cities, young successful women are finding it harder and harder to find a partner. Finding a suitable partner as a highly educated woman can be quite a challenge, let alone finding one that will actively support you in your career. We wish you the energy and focus to really work on this. Make time for it and be proactive and creative.

6. Relaxing and taking it easy

In our trainings we often come across situation in which people freeze and become miserable. If they had handled a situation in a more relaxed way and with humor, they would have been much more effective. A lot women could learn more about how to employ humor as a management tool and how to be more easy-going about their job. It will help them to overcome obstacles and achieve their goals more easily. A good preparation is all it takes to respond to strategies with humor, and is often much more effective than becoming miserable.

7. Stay close to your calling

We hope that you will find an organization that suits your calling. When the mission of an organization is connected to the calling of the employees, the result will be the highest form of engagement and energy. We want that for the employees, leaders, the organizations, the entire chain, including the customers.

12

From CEO to upcoming talent

What Direction could do for you

Direction can help in gaining insights and translate these into concrete results for your team and organization. We'd like to help you in designing interventions, and realizing the change you, your team or organization need. At home and abroad, we have helped thousands of women in shaping their careers. On average, the participants to our **Female Leadership** trainings review the training with a nine out of ten.

Direction serves as a discussion partner to management teams, boards of directors, and supervisory boards in the enforcement of diversity. We've supported over 8000 leaders after they have participated in one of our **Mindbugs trainings**. We help them design effective interventions to increase diversity, that fit the culture of the organization.

We also develop tools for leaders. Our best known tool is the **Direction Mindbugstest**. This test shows you how you rationally and emotionally choose for leadership positions; men or women. The test triggers you to make quick decisions and analyzes how you do this. After you've finished the test, you receive your personal report in your mailbox. The test can also be taken by teams or entire organizations. All individual participants receive their personal report, whereas the group as a whole receives a group report.

Recently, Direction developed the **Feed Forward Analyse™** for managers: a 360-degree growth-oriented feedback instrument with a positive approach. Leading scientific research shows that people have a hard time accepting feedback when it comes to the way they work.

Many feedback tools are therefore less effective than desired. The *Feed Forward Analyses™* shows those qualities that make a manager, a team and an organization more successful in this constantly changing world.

We also work together with organizations that wish to become more inclusive. Personal leadership and cooperation are important topics in our leadership programs, team sessions, and individual coaching programs, which are all tailor-made.

*For more information, please visit our website
www.management-development.com or contact our
office at info@dir.nl, or 00 31 3 5603 7979.*

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About the author

Esther Mollema is the managing director of Direction, which she founded in 1999. Direction provides training and development in the area of diversity and leadership. Direction translates scientific research to practical tools for organizations. Because of this, with her company, Esther invested in Andre de Waal's research on the success factors of high performance organizations. In 2007, this led to the founding of the High Performance Organization Center (HPO-center). Esther became a partner. From this position, she supports and advises organizations in their HPO change programs at home and abroad. In 2012, Esther became the Dutch partner of the Professional Boards Forum that supports women in achieving a position in supervisory boards. Her passion for diversity and better organizations has put her on the map in the Netherlands. For years now, she provides popular, high quality trainings, lectures, and master classes that are experienced as passionate, humorous and energetic. Esther Mollema is included in the Dutch Colorful 100 (2013) and The Next Women 100 (2014). Esther Mollema studied at the Dutch university of Nyenrode (BBA) and Thunderbird (MBA) in Phoenix, Arizona, USA, and took an executive education course at Harvard University. Between 1987 and 1999 she worked as a director at various trainings companies in the Netherlands, Japan, Germany and the United States.

13

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