

LEADING THROUGH GENERATIONS

Understanding leadership preferences across generations -
a Nordea case study

MSocSc Organisational Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Master's Thesis

15th of September 2020



Federica Giuseppini

S117294

Pages: 65

Characters: 148535

Supervisor Alice Neusiedler

Dept. of Management, Politics and Philosophy



Abstract

This thesis examines the relationship between leadership styles and different generations and thereby aims to explore what is the relation between different generations and leadership styles in an organizational context. The study focuses especially on individuals' perception of leadership across different generations. This focus should thereby help to understand what people from different generations perceive as good or as bad leadership. In order to understand these perceptions, the thesis first analyzes existing leadership theories and summarizes them as specific leadership styles. The theoretical basis is in a next step used to make sense of the collected interview data from 18 interviews, which are part of my case study "Nordea". Especially related to the topic of generations, only little data exists. Therefore, the combination of existing leadership theory with interview data across different age groups should shed some light on the relationship between leadership styles and generations. This paper concludes that across different generations, some very specific personal needs are related to the perception of good leadership. By being aware of these needs and integrating them for example in leadership training, companies can make sure to provide different generations with good leaders. Further research should focus on explaining leadership preferences not only with generational theories but considering other factors such as personal experience, culture or gender. Also, the relationship between generations and leadership has not been researched in a quantitative way yet. Looking at this subject from a quantitative angle could thereby showcase interesting correlations.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	- 2 -
TABLE OF CONTENTS	- 3 -
1. INTRODUCTION	- 6 -
2. BACKGROUND	- 10 -
2.1 Nordea.....	- 10 -
2.2 Workforce.....	- 10 -
2.3 Matrix organisation	- 11 -
2.4 Definitions	- 13 -
2.4.1 Definition of Generation	- 13 -
2.4.2 Definition of Leadership.....	- 14 -
2.4.3 Definition of my research.....	- 15 -
3. METHODOLOGY.....	- 17 -
3.1 Research Sample.....	- 18 -
3.2 Overview of Information Needed	- 20 -
3.3 Methods of Data Collection	- 21 -
3.4 Interviews.....	- 22 -
3.5 Data Analysis and Synthesis.....	- 24 -
3.6 Limitations.....	- 28 -
3.7 Delimitations	- 29 -
3.8 Philosophy of Science	- 30 -
3.9 Case Study	- 30 -

4.	THEORY	- 32 -
4.1	Great man leadership	- 34 -
4.1.1	Summary of a great man leader	- 36 -
4.2	Transactional leader	- 36 -
4.2.1	Summary of a transactional leader	- 37 -
4.3	Transformational leader	- 37 -
4.3.1	Summary of the transformational leader	- 39 -
4.4	Servant leader	- 39 -
4.4.1	Summary of a servant leader:.....	- 40 -
4.5	Generations & Leadership.....	- 40 -
4.6	Conclusion of theory.....	- 42 -
5.	ANALYSIS	- 43 -
5.1	Analysis by themes [reflective data overview].....	- 43 -
5.1.1	Perception of leadership	- 44 -
5.1.2	Theme Highlights 1	- 45 -
5.1.3	Other Themes.....	- 46 -
5.1.4	Theme Highlights 2	- 48 -
5.2	Other Factors - Context.....	- 48 -
5.2.1	Theme Highlights 3	- 50 -
5.3	Analysis part 2 - data findings & theory	- 51 -
5.3.1	Great man theory & trait theory.....	- 51 -
5.3.2	Transactional Leadership	- 54 -
5.3.3	Transformational Leadership.....	- 56 -
5.3.4	Servant Leadership	- 62 -
5.3.5	Theories on Generations & Leadership.....	- 67 -
6.	DISCUSSION.....	- 70 -
6.1	About generations	- 70 -
6.2	About Leader Interviewees.....	- 71 -
6.3	About interviewees	- 72 -
6.4	About Nordea	- 72 -
6.5	Factors that play a role	- 73 -
6.5.1	Experience	- 73 -
6.5.2	Culture	- 74 -
6.5.3	Type of employees.....	- 74 -
6.5.4	Gender	- 74 -
6.5.5	Understanding the employee perspective	- 75 -
7.	CONCLUSION.....	- 76 -

8.	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	- 79 -
9.	APPENDIX.....	- 83 -
9.1	Appendix I: <i>Interview Transcripts</i>.....	- 83 -
9.1.1	Interview with Anna.....	- 83 -
9.1.2	Interview with Solveiga.....	- 96 -
9.1.3	Interview with Fabiana.....	- 116 -
9.1.4	Interview with Jane.....	- 124 -
9.1.5	Interview with Karoline.....	- 134 -
9.1.6	Interview with Kristy.....	- 146 -
9.1.7	Interview with Morten.....	- 156 -
9.1.8	Interview with Martina.....	- 165 -
9.1.9	Interview with Jorgen.....	- 175 -
9.1.10	Interview with Nikolas.....	- 186 -
9.1.11	Interview with Patrick.....	- 198 -
9.1.12	Interview with Robin.....	- 207 -
9.1.13	Interview with Rosa.....	- 218 -
9.1.14	Interview with Robert.....	- 231 -
9.1.15	Interview with Sara.....	- 240 -
9.1.16	Interview with Simona.....	- 250 -
9.1.17	Interview with Timothy.....	- 261 -

1. Introduction

The history of humanity paints a picture of countless significant events and provides us with a myriad of thrilling stories. Many of these stories point to a hero individual who can be seen in front of crowds, directly influencing what others think, say or do. Whether it is Jesus being followed by masses, Napoleon leading an army to win the most difficult battles or Michelle Obama shaping thoughts of millions of people today, these hero-like figures have one thing in common: they all engage in leadership. As John C. Maxwell argues: "Everything rises and falls on leadership" (Olaniyan, 2017). And as Paul T.P. Wong says: "Leadership can bond people together or drive them apart. It can create unity out of disorder or promote chaos. It can inspire or destroy. It can be exercised by almost anyone but only a few seem to learn how to lead with a servant's heart" (Page & Wong, 2000). But how can this be learned? Or can it even be learned?

Over the years, the image of a good leader has changed, which is also reflected in leadership theories. Early approaches like the great man theory or the trait theory highlight this hero-like image of a strong leader described earlier and propose that leadership traits cannot be learned (Page & Wong, 2000). More recent theories have shifted away from particular traits a leader should have and focus more on a leader's behaviour. The transactional leadership theory for example proposes that leaders should focus on incentive structures to motivate employees (Den Hartog et al., 1997). And if we go towards even more recent theories, like the transformational leadership theory, the leader has more of an inspiring and enabling role instead of a managing one (Bass & Riggio, 2006). But which of these theories is right? What is good leadership and what is bad leadership?

One of the elements that allow us to recognize someone as a leader is undoubtedly their fellowship - one is not a leader unless one has followers willing to listen to what the leader has to say. Within the organisational context, leaders nowadays need to convince a new generation of employees to follow them: millennials. But how do they perceive leadership and do they have different preferences compared to other generations? Do they still want a heroic leader that they can look up to, like many people in Napoleon's days?

Self Centered, disrespectful, disloyal, unmotivated, overly self-confident and self-absorbed are only some of the many negative stereotypes associated with the millennials generation (Okros, 2020). Sources like Harvard business review have defined millennials as a burden for the CEOs and classify them as a specific harder segment to lead. Additionally, several popular presses like Pew Research Center have defined millennials as the "Look at Me" generation. A generation that is made up by individuals that are overly self-confident and self-absorbed, also recognized to lack loyalty and work ethic (Okros, 2020). Another source argues that in a business setting, millennials' narcissistic personalities lead them believing that they should be promoted on an average of two years, regardless of performance (Stein, 2013) .

These are only some of the renowned business magazines and leadership researches that acclaim the negative impact that millennials bring to the workplace and the incredibly negative connotation that contemporary literature showcases about modern generations. However, this is only a one sided view, as all the theories about leadership and generations, presented later within the thesis, try to show clear evidence that generations should have different ways of leading and preferred leadership styles. However, these theories fail to address the other factors that might play a role in shaping this preference such as culture, identity, nationality, gender and so forth. Similarly, the same generational theories have been highly used across the leadership literature as an explanation to business challenges. This broadly generalizes that each generation is seen as one group of individuals with the same ideals and preferences depending on the year they were born in. But can we just generalize this?

Previous research concludes that it is important to understand the impact that generational differences have on the organization to create an environment of harmony,

mutual respect, and joint effort that may lead to organizational success (Salahuddin, 2010). And previous research highlights that generations are motivated by different factors - to give an example, millennials are believed to be more motivated by a safe and predictable environment and less motivated by the ones that require innovative dynamic thinking . So how can a leader motivate this generation or others? In order to better understand the leadership preferences of different generations, I decided to interview people belonging to several different generations about leadership to understand if their experiences match with what these sources claim to be true. To support the aim of the research, this paper will include theories about generations and on leadership. Additionally, I included sources belonging to leadership explained by generations and how the two interact with each other in a business context.

Based on everything mentioned above and on my own opinion about the topic, the starting point of this research can be described with two main assumptions:

- **Different generations have/match different types of leadership**
- **Case study specific: Nordea and its high hierarchical structure might impose traditional leadership styles across the organisation**

These assumptions will neither be proven or disproven within this thesis. Instead, they were formulated with the hope to better understand what is the relationship between generations and leadership styles and to keep in mind during my research phase. The actual research question is therefore: **What is the relationship between different generations and leadership styles?**

In order to inquire about this research question, the first part of the thesis will give some background on the topic and will then critically assess existing leadership theories in order to summarize different leadership styles. This is followed by an explanation of the methodology, including an introduction to the case company Nordea, as well as a detailed list of the data sample, consisting of 18 interviews that were conducted in a semi-structured manner. The interview data is then analyzed with the theoretical summaries as support and key findings are presented, split up into five key themes. In the end, the

findings and the research are critically reflected upon and topics for future research are proposed.

2. Background

The background section is designed to provide the reader with the information needed to fully understand the reasoning behind the research and the analytical section. I will start by describing the organisation in terms of people, values and organisational structure, to contextualize the analysis chapter. Furthermore, I will describe the general definition of matrix organisation since it is extremely important to understand the leadership styles that the organisation calls for. After the context to this case is provided, I will continue to lay out the background behind the research question with the topic delimitation, and the three dimensions of the analysis that is conducted later in this paper: generation, leadership and the organisation, which will be displayed in different sections. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with contextual knowledge and a common understanding of the research objects and terminology used in this paper.

2.1 Nordea

In this chapter I will describe the organisation in terms of people, values, organisational structure and performance. This introduction to the case is designed to provide the reader with an overview of the organisation and to contextualize the case to better understand the analysis chapter.

2.2 Workforce

Nordea built its organisation on four main values: courage, ownership, collaboration and passion. These values represent the core of the organisational culture, they will be often mentioned in the interviews as well as the analysis of this thesis.

“Our values are a clear expression of the culture we want to build where people can be passionate about customers, collaborate intensely across the organisation, keep a true sense of ownership in our work and have the courage to speak up and challenge each other.”

Nordea is currently the leading financial group in the Nordic countries and one of the most established in Europe. Its historical roots go back to the 1800s. In 2019 the operating income and total assets were respectively 8.6 and 554.8 billions of EUR. In terms of people, according to their Annual Report for 2019, Nordea has 29,000 FTEs (1 FTE is equal to a full time contract) of which 49% female and 51% males, with 88 nationalities working across the organisation. The age distribution in the company is heterogeneous. The majority of employees (52%) are between 30 and 50 years old, 28% of the workforce is older than 50 years old and the smallest segment belongs to the age group of the workforce under 30 years old (Nordea, 2020).

I must clarify that the data in the graph above are analyzed on the bases of Nordea's FTEs which means that the stats were made exclusively based on full time employees and not part-time employees (e.g. students). Therefore, the workforce distribution overview disregards employees that were part of my research and therefore should be considered for the reader to have a better overview and understanding of the density of ages however should be taken as not accurate in regards to this research. The graph does well represent my initial assumption where the bank as part of the financial industry, a more traditional one, will be populated with a higher degree of older generations compared to the younger ones.

2.3 Matrix organisation

In order to fully comprehend an organization's leadership style, one needs to be aware of the underlying hierarchical structure of an organization. One structure that this thesis is putting in focus, is the structure of a matrix organisation. One of the major assumptions of this thesis is that Nordea and its high hierarchical structure might impose traditional leadership styles across the organisation. Judging from the interviewees presentation, Nordeas organizational structure is similar to a matrix organization, for which now follows the current understanding and context of the definition of this terminology.

“commonly design strategies that seem impossible to implement for the simple reason that no one can effectively implement third-generation strategies through second-generation organizations run by first-generation managers” (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1990)

Barlett and Ghoshal define the problem of organisations nowadays to be the distance between strategic thinking and organisational capabilities. Hence, organisations are incapable to implement the complex strategies that are formulated from the top management layer. These complex strategies require multiple and simultaneous management capabilities that result in a matrix organisation (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1990). The implementation of a matrix structure consists in a shift from a more traditional vertical functional set up to a hybrid one, function-by-project based (Burns & Wholey, 1993). In other words, a matrix organisation aims to integrate the functional structure with a horizontal project structure. Thus, project participants report simultaneously to their functional as well project manager (Larson & Gobeli, 1987). Matrix structures are team oriented arrangements that enhance cooperation across functional areas of the organisation. Which also led to a higher and broader participation in the decision making processes as well as sharing of knowledge (Burns & Wholey, 1993). They were established to enhance the organisational flexibility and foster acceptance of change as well as discouraging the formation of parochialism by overlapping responsibilities (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1990).

There are both advantages and disadvantages of matrix management. On one hand, matrix organisations can optimize the use of resources, organisational flexibility and increase the level of cooperation across divisions. On the other hand, a matrix organisation might result in more difficult to monitor and control project achievements

as well as issues (Larson & Gobeli, 1987). Moreover, the dual reporting to both functional and project managers can cause power struggles and conflict which might be the result of different leadership practices. To this negative side of matrix organisations, there are certain factors that are more likely to play a role in the development of those issues such as culture, language and distance (across nations)(Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1990). Barlett and Ghoshal argue that if managers want to build a great organisation they should focus on developing employees' attitudes and skills and linking them together. The core concept behind a great organisation is to define a clear shared vision and communicate a clear sense of purpose among the organisation (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1990).

2.4 Definitions

This subchapter will provide the reader with definitions of the three levels mentioned above: leadership, generations and the research itself. I will describe the sources implemented in the paper to make sense of the topic and also to guide the reader through my own reasoning behind the research process. Firstly I will present individual definitions based on the scholars that specialized in each dimension, this will provide the reader a starting point to understand the topic the same way as I did when I started researching. In each section, will I critically reflect on each leadership theory to finally develop my own summarizes.

2.4.1 Definition of Generation

One of the major challenges of this research is the lack of one common definition of the term generation. According to many theories such as Mannheim, the term generation is commonly misconceived by business scholars (Mannheim, 1952). In fact, many business researches focus on the conception of generation as predined cohorts representing distinct generations. For instance, according to this theory, the generation of Veterans includes individuals born between 1925 and 1942 (Lester et al., 2012). This is due to the common belief that people sharing the same historical experiences will most likely share a set of values and beliefs which will then conditionate personal leadership preference (Lester et al., 2012). In contrast, Mannheim defines this set of values to be enduring but

not immutable which means that people might develop these shared values however depending on their life experiences they could mutate to others (Parry & Urwin, 2011). Thus, he believes that to understand and define generations it is not sufficient to look at age, year of birth and life stage. He believes that people belonging to the same generation will grow apart when facing different stages in their life and work experiences (Parry & Urwin, 2011).

The theories just mentioned fail to consider personal differences and experiences as well as culture, therefore I decided to include contrasting theories such as lifespan perspective with the aim to give a full picture of the understanding of generations across the existing literature. The lifespan theory states that no age period is superior to others but personal development entails both continuous and discontinuous processes (Rudolph et al., 2018). Baltes (in Rudolph et al., 2018) set up seven propositions which emphasize the substantial role that biological, cognitive and psychological changes occurring though each individual life have in their development on an individual level. Thus, the theory emphasizes the fact that development is continuous (lifelong) and discontinuous (emergent). Due to the challenges the academic body has with defining the term 'generation', nurtured by the outline reasoning above, does this thesis define generation as "people who share the same values and beliefs based on shared historical experiences".

2.4.2 Definition of Leadership

"Leadership is one of the world's oldest preoccupations. The understanding of leadership has figures strongly in the quest for knowledge. Purposeful stories have been told through the generations about leader competencies, ambition and shortcomings; leaders' rights and privileges; and the leaders' duties and obligations." (Yammarino, 1993)

Across the whole world, societies were developed on myths and legends about individual heroes. The figure of leaders were present in many historical époques from histories of great heroes to contemporary leaders figures such as politicians. Even if the concept of leadership was always present throughout history, many failed to universally define it. The Oxford English Dictionary defines leadership as the action of leading a group of people or an organization (NODE, 2001). Leadership is the accomplishment of a goal

through the direction of human assistants. The man who successfully marshals his human collaborators to achieve particular ends is a leader. A great leader is one who can do so day after day, and year after year, in a wide variety of circumstances (Judge et al., 2002)

Leadership and leader are terms that are commonly used and yet poorly understood (Hosking, 1988). As demonstrated above with the definitions of leadership and leaders there is a little agreement on proper meaning of leadership. As Bass said: 'There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept' (Bass, 1981). Despite the heterogeneity of definitions of leadership across scholars they have conceived the term as an exercise of influence, a matter of personality, certain behaviors such as persuasion, power relation and an instrument to achieve goals.

Bass also discusses leadership in an organisational setting. He believes that organizational leaders can often be subjects of misperception due to the environmental and organizational factors playing a major role in organizational performance where leadership at his best only has a minor role. Despite Bass' belief, many scholars have proven that both management and leadership have a substantial role in organizational performance. It is a fundamental importance to understand leadership as a process rather than understand leadership by focusing on what leaders do. Processes that refer to (Hosking, 1988). In conclusion, leadership can be defined as an organizing activity and for this reason the concept and practices around leadership are of substantial importance to understand the dynamics of organisations (Hosking, 1988).

2.4.3 Definition of my research

After defining leadership and generations I will now describe how my research will approach the existing material and what insights are designed to bring in addition to the existing ones. The aim of this paper is to underline similarities and dissimilarities between generations and leadership style preferences. Because of the lack of consistency in defining what generations are across multiple scholars, I have decided to treat generations as defined by Mannheim. Thus, I will consider both the age and other factors such as life stages. Life stages as explained in the definition of generation is grouping

people that are in the same stage of life. This could be the example of people of different ages starting the same job position, which then would be considered as a group.

Not sharing the same year of birth or generational cohort will not be the only factor I will consider when talking about generations further on in the research. Which means that throughout my research I will not only consider age while analyzing the interviews but also I will apply it specifically to the case in the sense that I will consider individuals with the same organisational positions as a parameter together with generational theories based on age. As explained in the definition of generation, many researchers believe that each generation that shared experiences e.g. being born after the war and so having the same values on which leadership styles would be based (preferred) however there was no research that tried to study different generations in the same organisation and comparing leadership preferences and existing styles and also talk about personal experiences.

Theorists, like the ones mentioned above, make several strong assumptions about generations (age based/year of birth) behavior and preferences in relation to the workplace. Hence, the first set of theories described above supports the argument that different generational cohorts require different leadership styles, this generalised thinking is highly present in business scholars to explain leadership (Rudolph et al., 2018). Because of this I decided not to only consider generational thinking but also contrasting theories to better explain the phenomenon study in this paper. Aiming to underline factors or connection or explanations that would differ from the traditional explanation of leadership through generational thinking.

3. Methodology

In this chapter I will first explain the research sample of the case study. This is followed by an explanation of what information was necessary to obtain and why. Afterwards, I will go into the used data collection methods and highlight how I synthesized the data in the end. First I introduce the research sample, then describe the information needed to be collected, the methods of data collection, interviews, limitations, case study and philosophy of science.

This research study is not about discovering new hidden truths but to gain a deeper and broader understanding of perception of leadership across different generations. What are the common traits and perceptions and how does the phenomenon of leadership shape collaborative processes as well as own perceptions. In order to understand leadership across generations, I chose qualitative research in the form of 18 interviews. The implementation of qualitative research methods such as interviews allows to take a deeper look into the perceptions and personal understandings that employees and leaders had on positive and negative leadership. This research will therefore be a process of co-construction of knowledge between the researcher's pre-existing knowledge and the interpretations of the participants' data collected.

Reflections: during my research it was hard to conduct the exact structure of interviewees due to the highly complex structure of the organisation (e.g. graduates have line managers but also rotation coordinators). Thus, the previously displayed overview

3.1 Research Sample

In qualitative research each setting is unique and consists of a mix of people and contextual factors (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). This section will describe the research sample that was selected to participate in the study. Because the reliability of the study relies on the quality of methods implemented in the research, a rational sampling strategy of participants is a must (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). The interviewees were selected according to the method of purposive sampling in which participants' selection follows the logic of targeting information-rich cases (Schultze & Avital, 2011). Since the research is a study of generations and leadership, purposive sampling appeared to be more suitable to understand the phenomenon under investigation to create a differentiated sample between generations. As I will analyze a specific case study, this type of sampling is a method that is especially suited (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

The study started with the idea to interview a group of four employees per one or two managers (of the same organizational group, such as graduates), starting from the bottom and moving up in the organisational structure. The total of the interviews conducted is 18 of which 7 leaders and 11 employees. The main criteria for selection of participants were that all participants were employed at Nordea at the time of the interviews and that they should not have the exact same age. This was challenging when selecting the students due to the fact that they all shared the same or close year of birth. Nonetheless, purposeful sampling allowed for sampling of generations with a focus on the current generation (across different levels of the organisation). Purposeful sampling also was based on differentiation of certain characteristics such as different educational backgrounds, working experiences, gender and nationality. In the following is an overview of the interviewees, including whether they are a leader, student, graduate or employee, their position in the company and their age.

Overview of Interviewees						
n.	Interviewee	In Text	Position	Age	Date	Pages

LEADERSHIP THROUGH GENERATIONS

1	Timothy	Leader #1	Head of Students	25	17/03/2020	18
2	Fabiana	Student #1	Student	23	23/03/2020	10
3	Jane	Student #2	Student	24	24/03/2020	11
4	Karoline	Leader #2	Head of Graduates	57	27/03/2020	13
5	Martina	Student #3	Student	19	30/03/2020	12
6	Anna	Graduate #1	Graduate	28	30/03/2020	16
7	Rose	Graduate #2	Graduate	29	03/04/2020	15
8	Robin	Graduate #3	Graduate	28	07/04/2020	13
9	Jorgen	Student #4	Student	25	08/04/2020	14
10	Robert	Leader #3	Head of Graduates	35	15/04/2020	12
11	Sara	Employee #1	Operational Risk Officer	30	15/04/2020	12
12	Paul	Leader #4	Leader of change + leadership trainings	58	15/04/2020	X
13	Simona	Graduate #4	Graduate	25	17/04/2020	13
14	Nikolas	Employee #2	Management Support Specialist + executive advisor	26	18/04/2020	14
15	Morten	Employee #3	Business Analyst	28	20/04/2020	10

16	Patrick	Leader #5	Technology Service Head, Infrastructure Engineering	30	20/04/2020	12
17	Kristy	Leader #6	Head of Technology Strategy & Executive Adviser	35	21/04/2020	11
18	Solveiga	Leader #7	Executive Adviser I Transformation I Strategy I Execution	50	23/04/2020	24

3.2 Overview of Information Needed

When conducting an interview, some typical information elements are looked for. These elements will make the data more complete and will help analyze the interview data. According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), the areas of information that are typically needed for qualitative researches are: contextual, perceptual, demographic and theoretical.

Contextual information describes the culture and environment of a setting (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). In this case study, the contextual information is Nordea as an organisation, its values and culture. According to Lewinn (in Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012) the elements and culture present in the environment might influence behaviors, due to the fact that human behavior is a function of the interaction of an individual and the environment. The primary method used to collect contextual information is an extensive review of the organisation's internal documents (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). The research therefore includes a chapter on the case organisation that was selected based on internal documents such as annual reports (2018 and 2019) and information that was created internally and shared publicly on Nordea's website.

Demographic information is another crucial element of qualitative research that might support the understanding of individuals' perceptions as well as differences and similarities between the interviewees (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). During this study the demographic information was collected at the end of the interviews. Information like educational background, age, nationality and amount of years they were employed at Nordea. This information was highly regarded when analyzing the data, so that the research would be open to other factors playing a role in the relationship between leadership and generations.

The third type of information needed is perceptual, which refers to the personal perception of the participants related to a particular subject of the research. The interviewees tell the story that they believe to be true (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). This is thus also the main aspect of the research: participants' perceptions of what is a leader, what defines bad and good leadership. This aspect was therefore a core concept in my interviews' question set up and analysis.

Lastly theoretical, the last type of information is of theoretical kind. Several theories were selected to provide the necessary theoretical background on which the study is built upon. These theories include the great man theory, traits theory, transactional leadership, transformational leadership and servant leadership. Theories belonging to different school of thoughts about leadership and its practices. These theories were selected in order to have sufficient theoretical information to analyze the empirical data.

3.3 Methods of Data Collection

This section aims to rationalize the choice of methods, in particular using semi-structured interviews as the primary method of collecting data. To guide the interviewees, I sent out a questionnaire with a table of adjectives in relations to what traits leaders should have. Interviewees classified these adjectives from not important to very important. The purpose was not to collect statistical data, but instead to open a conversation about leaders and what traits, according to the interviewees' perception, would be important for leaders to possess. At the end of the interview I sent out a second questionnaire which

was similar to the first but that it would focus more on generations and leadership. Here is a more detailed explanation of each step:

Questionnaire n.1 (structured interview): designed to introduce the general perception on what are the most important attributes that a leader should have. The first questionnaire was presented to each interviewee before the actual interview. This was done to undermine perception before introducing the idea of generations into the research.

Semi-structured interviews: Individual interviews were conducted with each participant and the length was between 35 and 90 minutes per interview. The aim was to get personal insights and deeper understanding of the individuals' perceptions of leadership based on experiences and feelings.

Questionnaire n.2 (structured interview): designed to assess the impressions of leaders and employees specifically connected to generations. Using the same adjectives (as the first one) to see if the variable of age and the attribute value correlate or not.

I must specify that for the questionnaire and the interviews I did not specify generations with them, did not set up a guideline on generations definitions but only definitions of the attributes of different generations, to have a more standardized understanding of the adjectives. It was therefore up to the individual to classify generations. In the study, only younger and previous generations were mentioned, which by assumption would be the generation belonging to their own age group. This was due to the inconsistency of generational theories which I mention in the introduction and background of this paper.

In the following, the main research method, the semi-structured interviews will be explained in more detail.

3.4 Interviews

Interviews are the primary method of collection of data of this research. The research is not trying to produce new substantial knowledge about the studied topic when conducting interviews. Instead, it hopes to reproduce common opinions and prejudices

with the intention that the interviews will inspire future research to new interpretations of the topic of leadership and generations. Research interviews, like semi-structured interviews, are interviews where knowledge is constructed in the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale, 2011). According to Kvale (2011), the interviewer during the interaction sustains a power positing by determining the topic of the interaction. However, that aspect of power was not intended for this research. The structure of the interview was therefore carefully set up to establish, with personal questions, an informal conversation more than an interaction of power.

One of the issues of this method is thus the level of ethics. Because the knowledge generated during any interchange depends on social relationships between the parties, creating a setting where the interviewee feels free and safe to talk is of substantial importance (Kvale, 2011). During the preparation stage of the interviews, these factors were accounted for, and measures were implemented to define an environment where the subjects of the study felt secure to share experiences and thoughts. At the time when the participants were contacted, it was communicated that the data would be collected and anonymously implemented in the research. To ensure that the interviewees were ethically protected I have not used their real names and I have changed their age so that they would not be easily recognizable by others.

Qualitative research attempts to cover both a factual level and a meaning one. With the purpose of attempting to understand themes of the lived world of the subjects of the study, I chose to carry semi-structured interviews. Moreover, this method aims to obtain descriptions with respect to an individual's interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena (Kvale, 2011). The importance relies in collecting and listening to explicit descriptions as well as the meaning described (Kvale, 2011). Therefore, when in doubt of the right interpretation of the meaning communicated by the subjects of the study, the interviewer often attempted to receive immediate confirmation or disconfirmation of the answers gained. Furthermore, another element that is of substantial importance, when seeking meanings on a concrete level, is the description of specific situations and actions more than general opinion on the topics (Kvale, 2011). Thus, when designing the interview structure and after implementing more general

questions to set up a conversational setting, questions such as “describe a situation when you have experienced positive leadership” were implemented.

3.5 Data Analysis and Synthesis

Since this is a deductive study, the collection and analysis of data was based on existing theories. The coding frame was developed based on the initial assumptions as well as expectations of what the qualitative data would be about, based on leadership theories. There are six main codes: perception of leadership, being a leader, a matter of age or experience, leadership practices (at Nordea) and other factors. I will now describe each of the main codes.

Perception of leadership is related to everything connected to an individual’s perception of leadership. This includes, what each individual believes bad and good leadership to be and why. This code is based on personal experiences and very detailed questions about situations that remind the interviewees of good as well as bad leadership. Being a leader is about the responsibilities and actual tasks that a leader has and also about the personality type and traits that make someone a leader. A matter of age or experience looks at everything related to age or experience level in a workplace. For instance, being called in a meeting because of the lack of experience to learn about specific tasks would be coded as experience level. The code leadership practices relate to Nordea’s practices that shape leadership within the organisation (e.g. leadership training and therefore what leadership practices are recommended). Last but not least, the code other factors includes other factors that might play a role in the relationship between generations and leadership. In the following, the codes and their definition are listed, together with subcodes.

Being a leader is about what his or her main responsibilities should be and what behaviors should a leader have. The first part is about responsibilities, so regard everything related to tasks and responsibilities that only leaders have. The other side is about behaviors and personality traits that leader should have for example charisma. The third main code is A matter of age or experience which is designed to understand if a

certain behavior was experience due to the age of the individuals or the level of professional experience. The fourth is Leadership practices. This code is about the leadership practices, styles, behaviors that Nordea has or wants to implement in the organisation. Lastly, the code of Other factors which is designed to identify what other aspects are involved in the understanding of the relation between generations and leadership.

Overview of Codes			
Code	Code definition	Subcode	Subcode definition
Perception of Leadership	Everything connected to personal subjective perception of what leadership should be. What is good, what is bad, how do employees and leaders themselves see an ideal leader.	Good Leadership	Actions that are perceived as good leadership + positive impact
		Bad Leadership	Actions that are perceived as bad leadership + negative impact
		Managers vs leaders	Differentiation between a manager and a leader (traits, actions, thoughts)
		Admiration Factor	The admiration factor: feeling of a follower towards a person they consider to be a good leader
		Communication Factor	Implications of lack and presence of communication (from both employees and leaders)
		Impact of a leadership practices	Effects of leaders works, actions, values and culture ++ environment that is fostered / created by leadership styles

		Desires, expectations & values	What employees want and expect from a work place, a leader and a team
		"If you were a leader"	Asking employees how they would motivate and evaluate their own employees if they were leaders
		Advices to a leader	Taking it a step further asking employees to give advices to leaders
Being a Leader: actual responsibilities + Personality traits	This code is about what being a leader is about from a job specific perspective as well as their personality	Tasks	Actual practical tasks that are part of leader role
		Responsibilities	What is the actual responsibility of a leader (e.g. team performance, specialist tasks); what is expected from them?
		Challenges	What are the challenges that leader face
		Personal Values	Personal values such as honesty, collaboration, ecc
		Behavioral traits	General personality traits that are commonly recognized and connected with leaders "naturally inclined to be a leader"

		Personal Motivation	Leaders motivation to lead
		Fears	What do leaders fear about being a leader?
A matter of age or experience?	Everything related to age at the working place + different level of working experience	Age	About age
		Experience level (Leading team)	About experience level at work (e.g. leading students, leading graduates, leading experienced full time)
Leadership Practices	Nordea's leadership practices such as trainings and evaluation systems	Trainings about leader's development	Everything connected with leaders development e.g. trainings, experiences, books
		Feedback & evaluations	At Nordea feedback is a huge part of leadership practices (employees + leaders)
		"Two-faced" leadership	Being a leader + understanding employees
Other Factors	Factors that play a role in the relationship of leadership and generations	Cultural differences	Everything related to cultural differences
		Gender	Perception of gender discrimination

		Nordea Specific	Actions, thoughts and others made around Nordea best interests
		Organizational structure	How the employees at Nordea perceive the org structure e.g. high or low hierarchy

3.6 Limitations

During the time of the research we faced the spreading of a world pandemic: Coronavirus. The country lockdown in Denmark meant the closing of crowded spaces such as offices. The unfortunate situation limited the ability to conduct interviews in person as well as the implementation of research designs such as observations (work environment and interactions at work) during such. Therefore the research was fully conducted virtually, mainly via Skype and mobile calls. This might have been a significant limitation in the gathering of the empirical data. Moreover, one of the interviews I have conducted (leader #4) resulted extremely challenging to transcribe due to recording issues which made it impossible to include in the analysis. Additionally to the interviews, I believe that observations would have been extremely beneficial, because of the high degree of subjectivity of the topic of leadership, where observations could have given more insights. However, due to the Covid-19 and the fact that interviews had to be conducted via Zoom, I had to rely exclusively on interviewees' spoken accounts of past activities.

The choice of RQ was the first delimitation that I have made together with the assumptions described in the introduction. Deciding to study two topics led me to develop three levels of analysis in the research: generation, leadership and the organisation (case study). The aim of this research is to identify connections between generations and leadership styles, specifically to uncover leadership style preferences based on generations. Since the two main topics I am researching on (leadership and generations) belong to the abstract domain I decided to focus my data collection and

analysis on qualitative data. This choice was also sustained by the fact that leadership has mainly been explained and researched on a qualitative basis so far. As I will explain in the methodology section, there were two main data collection techniques surveys and interviews. I deliberately decided to begin the interview with a survey sent to each participant based on assessing the importance of certain attributes that belong to different leadership styles. The set up was chosen to guide the interview towards describing leadership styles in terms of these adjectives that would have helped in the analysis to recognize leadership styles.

Moreover, I have delimited my research by choosing interviewees to ensure a broader spectrum of ages, thus making sure to have a variety of different generations participating in the research. Considering the assumption that leadership roles would most likely be represented by older generations I decided to select my interviewees and target them based on their ages and experience level in the bank. I wanted to make sure that I would be able to interview young leaders as well as older employees with the aim to undermine similarities and differences and to avoid creating a generational gap between interviews belonging to different roles. Furthermore, since a consistent amount of leadership academics explains leadership based on cultures I have selected international as well as danish individuals to interview.

3.7 Delimitations

This research is delimited by the fact that I decided to develop a case specific study which represents only a part of the “truth” of the topic which will not allow to generalize my findings. Additionally, the interviewees belong to the same organisational side (under IT) which allows me to answer my specific research question but not applying the findings elsewhere. However, it permitted me to analyze deeply that side of the organisation where both business and technical people coexist and collaborate. Moreover, delimiting the research to the financial sector was carefully selected to challenge the common idea of hierarchy and leadership in traditional organisations such as banks.

3.8 Philosophy of Science

In regards to my standpoint on philosophy of science, this research is based on critical humanism. Critical humanism focuses on human subjectivity and experiences - "The term critical humanism suggests orientations that focus on human experience - that is, with the structure of experience and its daily nature - and that acknowledge the social roles" (Adrian & Len, 2006, p. 196). Thus, critical humanism looks at how individuals talk, act and the way they experience the world (Adrian & Len, 2006). I believe that this philosophical approach will fit the research and the understanding of the empirical material since the topic of leadership is based on human interactions and actions. In regards to ontology, the study of the nature of reality (Adrian & Len, 2006), this research considers reality as not static. This means that reality is continuously changing and developing. For the understanding of leadership this suggests to see the phenomenon as a continuously shaping depending on who is experiencing it.

3.9 Case Study

"To MacIntyre (1984, 214, 216), the human being is a 'story-telling animal,' and the notion of a history is as fundamental a notion as the notion of an action" MacIntyre (1984)

Many theorists have been criticizing the methodological choice of the case study because of its lack of reliability. Several critics are addressed to this methodological approach related to the lack of validity, the inability to contribute to scientific development and impossibility to generalize (Lester et al., 2012). According to Flyvbjerg, the generalizability of a case study is strongly dependent on the selection of the case and a random sample might not allow to gather the greatest amount and most valuable information (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Thus, the choice mentioned above of the researcher to select a certain kind of sample.

"A purely descriptive, phenomenological case study without any attempt to generalize can certainly be of value in this process and has often helped cut a path toward scientific innovation" -Flyvbjerg

The purpose of this study is not to generalize from the case chosen but rather to describe and provide a deeper look into the topic of leadership. Since this is a topic of reflection and perception, I should focus on the social actor's viewpoints and behavior. Thus, there needs to be room for the researcher to place him or her within the research context to achieve the most advanced form of understanding (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Assuming that research is a human learning process, the case study methodology allows an element of narrative which can help unfold the complexity and contradictions of real life (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This research tells the story from a multitude of sides, complex and sometimes conflicting sides of the actors involved. The purpose of the researcher is to involve the readers with their own interpretation of the topic and of the case itself by offering different perspectives. Something to be aware of is the challenging process of summarizing the case and therefore according to Flyvbjerg, a good study should be read as narrative in their entirety.

4. Theory

This chapter is designed to reflect upon existing literature about leadership. The purpose of this section is, therefore, to critically reflect on existing leadership theories and combine them with each other. This will provide the foundation to develop a guide that will help us identify leadership styles across the empirical data, based on the main leadership theories of the past decades. These theoretical foundations will then help me to define leadership profiles in the selected case study, based on the eighteen interviews that I have conducted. I will analyze descriptions and approaches of leaders from both leaders' own and employees' perspectives. Hence, I will consider descriptions from leaders about their own leadership role, as well as employees and their preferred leadership style. The description of leadership theories will be based on factors such as adjectives used to describe them, perceptions, behaviors and values. I will present the existing theories in this order: The great man theory, transactional leadership, transformational leadership and servant leadership. Furthermore, at the end of the chapter I will present existing theories on generations and leadership combined.

In the next chapter I will implement these critical theoretical summaries and use them to analyze the interviews. The outcome of this analysis will then match them with existing theories. The employees' descriptions of positive and negative leadership will help understand who good and bad leaders are according to each individual's perception. This will help to individuate affinities and dissimilarities between what individuals belonging

to the same generations, perceive as good or bad leadership. Finally, this will help answering the research question: What is the relationship between different generations and leadership theories/styles?

In order to provide a wide variety of leadership theories, I have decided to include main leadership theories from the eighteen hundreds all the way to contemporary theories, developed within the past decade. The theories go from the great man theory to servant leadership together with trait theory, transactional and transformational leadership. From the many schools of thought I have decided to incorporate the ones that were the most groundbreaking, as well as the more theoretically defined and commonly discussed ones. I have excluded minor variations to the main theories, because of the many similarities they share. Due to these similarities, I believe that it would have been hard to recognize them based on the conducted interviews only. Therefore, it was necessary to include theories that differ from each other to a greater extent. For example, a theory like inspirational leadership, which correlates with the great man theory, was disregarded and instead transactional leadership was included, as it shares less similarities with the previous developed theories. However, I have made one exception to this method by adding the trait theory to the great man theory for a better understanding of the latter. I will explain this exception in more detail later in the chapter.

One of the main challenges faced during this research process is the high level of fragmentation of leadership theories across scholars. This aspect made it difficult to define what leaders belonging to each theory would like. Therefore, I will critically reflect on common characteristics of the theories belonging to different scholars to create a summary of each leadership style, which will then be used when analyzing the empirical data collected. An additional challenge is the heterogeneity and controversiality of sources on generational theories and how they are used within the existing business literature. As mentioned in the background section, this made it incredibly challenging to define generations, and to analyze the data based on generational cohorts and timelines. Therefore, the last section of this chapter includes sources that are concerned with both leadership and generations, aiming to understand how leadership has been understood and explained by generational theories so far.

I decided to present the theories in a chronological order, in order to help the reader develop an understanding of why leadership theories evolved the way they did. One of the assumptions that initiated this study is that different generations match different types of leadership. Therefore, to underline possible connections between generations and leadership I decided to present theories in the order they were written (chronological order). This approach should help to reveal similarities and dissimilarities of generational preferences for different leadership styles. Because we know generations as a process of continuous development from one to the other, is it possible that the concept of leadership could function in the same way? And if yes, could it be due to the fact that leadership might be strictly connected to society, and so if one changes the other has to alter respectively?

I have selected five main leadership theories to make sense of the empirical material collected for the study. Some of the theories like servant and transformational leadership that were mentioned in the interviews suggested that the presence of these practices in Nordea and led to the assumption that the bank was promoting these practices across the organisation. Other theories like the great man theory were chosen because of their contrasting arguments to recent theories. This was also based on the initial assumption that in a complex and traditional organisation such as a bank, there might be a higher presence of hierarchy and therefore more traditional leadership practices such as transactional leadership. Hence, including more contradicting theories would give a more complete picture. In the following paragraphs I will go into each of the leadership theories in detail to later apply it to the case study.

4.1 Great man leadership

The great man theory is a complex notion of leadership compared to recent ones, which are clearly fitting into academic categories (Spector, 2014). However, despite the lack of scientific rigor that the great man theory has, it is highly mentioned across leadership scholars and remains relevant in the business world (Spector, 2014). Since it was originally not born as a leadership theory but more as a sociological notion, I argue that including the trait theory will help the reader to better understand this great man

leadership style. I have decided to incorporate trait theory to support and create a critical overview of what a leader belonging to this approach could be like. In the following, I will describe both theories, followed by a summary of the most common factors between them. Additionally, I will highlight contrasting views from different sources that understand the great man theory in different ways.

As argued in the leadership journal of SAGE, the great man theory was first codified in 1841 by Carlyle but emerged long before that, as part of historical literature. Some speculate that it descended from stories about courageous heroes and great generals. For example, Spencer in 1873 argued that great men were sent by God to be heroes and these heroes became leaders through the righteous process of hero worship, which he believes to work as a theory of leadership (Spector, 2014). In 2014 Spector reinforced the idea that this theory was present all along leadership schools of thoughts and influenced their development as their theoretical pillars. He also argued for the connection between the great man theory and contemporary ones such as transformational leadership (Spector, 2014). Spector believes that transformational leadership invokes images reminiscent from this theory which portray heroic figures that can achieve almost any impossible organizational challenge (Spector, 2014). This similarity between these two theories (great man and transformational leadership) is unequivocally present across the empirical data. There is evidence showing the connection between these theories and proposing that one theory would not have been coined without the other one. This, among other analytical insights, will be discussed in the next chapter where the case and the empirical evidence are introduced.

Throughout history, many different approaches to leadership have been proposed, one of the earliest was the trait approach which dominated the leadership scene up to late 1940s according to the Encyclopedia of Business in Today's World (Sage, 2009). Trait theory proposes that certain traits differentiate ordinary individuals from leaders. Thus, there are specific traits that suggest leader emergence across a group of individuals (Colbert et al., 2012). Among several traits that define an individual to be inclined to be a leader there are intelligence, integrity, sociability and self-confidence (Colbert et al., 2012). Unlike the great man theory, trait theory does not state that leaders have to be

great individuals to succeed in leading others. However there are certain traits they need to possess, which differentiate them from others (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991).

Both the great man theory and the trait theory define the leader to be someone that possesses distinctive characteristics or traits. This would imply that there are skills that individuals are not able to learn but have to be born with in order to be considered leaders (SAGE, 2019). Many sources connect the great man theory to a higher degree of team performance as well as a higher level of employee satisfaction (Borgatta et al., 1954). I would argue that this is the only aspect which even authors agree on who otherwise have rather different opinions about the theory.

In conclusion, these theories shape a leader profile which is highly based on personal and interpersonal skills. These skills are commonly recognized as drive, desire to lead, honesty, integrity, self-confidence, cognitive ability and knowledge of the business (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). Hence, this leadership profile is focused on understanding the person traits more than his or her behaviors. This is in strong contrast with the leader profiles discussed in latter sections.

4.1.1 Summary of a great man leader

Leader:	A man (or woman) of traits that are uncommon across a group
Focus:	The leader himself / herself
Characteristics:	The ability to achieve what seems to be “impossible”, individual traits such as honesty, confidence, intellect and charisma

4.2 Transactional leader

Transactional leadership theory is built upon a continuous cost-benefit exchange process between the follower and the leader (Den Hartog et al., 1997). In this relationship the leader defines performance criteria that are expected from the subordinates and what they receive in return. This system thus suggests that reaching the designated

performance will result in rewards, whereby the term reward is not necessarily connected with monetary rewards only (Den Hartog et al., 1997).

The transactional leader is able to identify subordinates' needs and can thereby define the exchange process for meeting those needs. This process is meant to be mutually beneficial for the two parties (Den Hartog et al., 1997). However, the focus of the leader is directed towards the organization's objectives and not directly towards their employees first. This type of leadership is highly based on bureaucracy, authority, task completion and relies on a system of punishments and rewards (Den Hartog et al., 1997). There are some similarities between transformational leadership and trait theory, in fact transformational leaders rely on forms of personal power such as charisma to influence their followers. Therefore, both theories recognize that there are traits that enhance leaders capabilities of leading others.

4.2.1 Summary of a transactional leader

Leader:	A man or woman of leader-like traits who achieves goals with the help of reward systems
Focus:	Exchange based relationship focused on Organisational performance
Characteristics:	The ability to incentivize employees to achieve organisational goals based on rewards and punishment system

4.3 Transformational leader

If on the one hand, transactional leadership is based on social exchanges, transformational leadership on the other hand focuses on stimulating and inspiring followers to achieve their goals and develop their own skills (Bass & Riggio, 2006) . Transformational leadership involves a strong personal identification with the leader, which is a characteristic that strongly differentiates this theory from the previous ones

(Bass & Riggio, 2006). While some scholars such as Bryman (1992) argue that a leader can be both transformational and transactional, Bass holds the opinion that a leader can go from transactional to transformational but not vice versa (Den Hartog et al., 1997). Personally, I find it hard to believe that a leader could be simultaneously transactional and transformational since the focus on one is about reaching organizational performance based on rewards and the other is to achieve the same by understanding values and motivating employees. While the goals might be the same, the means to achieve them are completely different.

The transformational leadership style is based on four characteristics: charisma, inspiration, individual consideration and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1990). Charisma is the only factor that is shared among the rest of the theories, while the other characteristics go far beyond individual traits. This mainly happens as there is a shift of the focus away from the traits of the leader and towards the employees themselves (Bass, 1990). Hence, transformational leadership is more concerned with the progress and development of others rather than with the leader or the organisational performance (Gregory Stone et al., 2004). The charismatic factor is conceptualized by self-confidence, determination, intellect, verbal skills and strong ego ideas (Bass, 1990). Despite these personal qualities, transformational leaders nurture intellect across the organisation by hiring the “best and the brightest”. Avolio (in Gregory Stone et al., 2004) describes four behaviors that can be linked with transformational leaders: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. These behaviors are characterized respectively by charismatic influence, relationship building based on communication, encouraging followers development and effective listening. Avolio seem to agree with the four characteristics mentioned by Bass as well as the other sources included in this passage (Gregory Stone et al., 2004).

One of the main tasks of a transformational leader is to create a common sense of purpose and mission for the group, so that the employees are encouraged to develop a commitment to organisational objectives (Gregory Stone et al., 2004). The leaders belonging to this category are able to transform personal values of their followers to support the vision and goals of the organisation. This is achieved by fostering the creation

of a work environment based on trust in which visions can be shared and relationships can be formed (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

According to Bass and Riggio (2006), there are two factors that define modern leadership: initiating or organizing work and showing consideration for the employees. This strong statement clearly defines a separation between the leadership theories above and transformational leadership. Another main difference that transformational leadership has compared to the previously mentioned theories is the belief that the skills needed to be a leader can be learned and should be trained within an organisation (Bass, 1990). This therefore also implies a very different relevance to leadership training, compared to just hiring the right people.

4.3.1 Summary of the transformational leader

Leader:	A man or woman able to create a common sense of purpose and vision
Focus:	Employees development, as well as organisational performance
Characteristics:	Ability to transform employees values into support for the organisational performance, personal characteristics like charisma, importance of communication

4.4 Servant leader

Empowerment, team-building, and participatory management are all ideals belonging to the notion of servant leadership. This leadership theory emphasizes that the focus of the leader should be to serve others, promoting a sense of community and sharing power in decision making processes. In fact, at the heart of servant leadership lays the genuine desire to serve others for the common good (Page & Wong, 2000).

While servant leaders prioritize their followers' goals and development and have the ability to influence through their support itself, transformational leaders focus on the organisational objective first. Character is thereby a central concept of servant

leadership: servant leaders are value- and character- driven individuals which also means that what they do and how they do it is shaped by who they are (Page & Wong, 2000). Hence, this leadership practice is not really based on a framework you can easily follow. Instead it is lived and implemented by individuals themselves. It is thus also hard to conceptualize and define this leadership practice, because of its dependence on who the leader is and how they interact with their team. However, we can define the general focus to be on employees' goals and their development rather than the organizational objectives. According to Paul & Wong (2000), there are certain factors that characterize servant leaders, such as character orientation (e.g. integrity and humility), people orientation (e.g. caring, empowering and developing others), task-orientation (e.g. visioning) and process orientation (e.g. team building and shared decision-making).

Stephen Covey (in Page & Wong, 2000) on leadership: ". . . inner motivation towards achieving a common purpose . . . The leader does this by engaging the entire team organization in a process that creates a shared vision that inspires each to stretch and reach deeper within themselves and to use their unique talents in whatever way is necessary to independently and interdependently achieve that shared vision." Covey emphasizes that there are other basic needs in addition to the profit motive: "What about the need to develop and use talent, the mind? What about the need for meaning, for purpose, for contribution, for service, for adding value, for making a difference?"

4.4.1 Summary of a servant leader

Leader:	A man or woman with the genuine desire to serve others and let them reach their goals
Focus:	Employees' goals and their development
Characteristics:	Importance of employees development, sense of community and sharing decision making

4.5 Generations & Leadership

“Each generation is profoundly influenced by the times in which it grows up – the music, movies, politics, and defining events of that period ... Members of a cohort [generation] share the same major culture, political, and economic experiences. They have similar outlook and values. Marketers often advertise to a cohort group by using the icons and images prominent in their experience.” (Parry & Urwin, 2011)

This section combines theories of generation and leadership. Existing theories make numerous assumptions about how generations operate in the workplace and how they are the ones that influence leadership practices. As mentioned in the introduction, several well-known journals discussed leadership in relation to generation, with the core argument that members belonging to different generation cohorts require, as well as desire, certain types of leadership practices to achieve optimal performance.

“...millennials are most assuredly different than their predecessors with respect to ideas, behaviors and viewpoints, and ... organizational leaders will have to lead these employees, by necessity, differently” (Parry & Urwin, 2011).

There are several theories that aim to explain the relationship between generations and leadership. However, we can divide them into two different categories. The first is explaining leadership with generationalized thinking. Therefore generational divisions such as millennials, baby boomers and so on, are used to understand leadership. On the other side there is the life span theory which disregards generations as age period (cohorts) and instead explains the phenomenon of leadership with individuals' life experiences (Parry & Urwin, 2011). This theory is called life span perspective and it rejects the concept of generalizing behaviors based on age groups and instead considers individuals' life experiences and development (Parry & Urwin, 2011).

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, age has been broadly used to create segments, driven by the belief that generational groups will share certain values or preference (Mannheim, 1952). This is because individuals that share certain historical events, educational systems, as well as cultural trends (e.g. music) will develop similar values. Sociological scholars like Mannheim believed that it is not the year of birth that

determines this cohort. Instead, individuals have to go through certain common experiences which bond them and help them develop a shared identity in a group.

4.6 Conclusion of theory

This chapter is meant to define the leadership theories that have been selected and to further explain the reasons why some were selected while others were disregarded. The aim of the research is to see if there is any connection between leadership and generations, that was not yet explained by theories. Therefore, this research presents an introduction to the concept of generations and their cohorts in the initial sections and a deeper and critical summary of leadership theories, combined with the concept of generations in this chapter. The great man theory, transactional, transformational and servant leadership were chosen, and combined with sources that explain the generational aspect. All of this literature was chosen to provide a bigger picture about the combination of leadership and generations, in order to make sense of the following chapter.

5. Analysis

The first part of this analysis is a reflective summary of the collected interview data. Since this research is based on a substantial amount of qualitative material, I want to provide the reader with a critical summary of all themes, and of the key empirical concepts present in the interviews. Afterwards, I will make sense of them, utilizing the theories mentioned in the chapter above. These two parts of the analysis will then be used together to present the overall findings of the research.

This analytical approach is intended to walk the reader through a reflective journey about leadership. As the research involves a high degree of reflection, both personally and the interviewees, I believe that the right way to present the analysis and the findings is to guide the reader through the complete process. In the analysis by themes (from codes), I take a closer look at how the interviewees perceive leadership practices. I will now present a critical overview of the three main themes present in my research, which are: perception of leadership, other factors and other themes.

5.1 Analysis by themes [reflective data overview]

This research was developed with the initial assumption that different generations prefer different types of leadership. In order to make sense of this assumption, I wanted to see whether it could be explained by other factors outside of the ones explained by existing theories. As the topic of leadership is based on personal perception and preferences, it is therefore highly subjective, so analysis by themes could provide a broader understanding of the topic.

5.1.1 Perception of leadership

The main question this research aims to answer is “What is the relationship between different generations and their respective leadership styles?” This relationship is based on the subjective perception that individuals have, and their personal understanding of what leadership is. This research aimed to investigate the connection between generations and their compatibility with existing leadership theories. I have noticed two main features when interviewees are describing leadership. One aspect is related to their perception of leadership. The other is the responsibilities of being a leader, such as leaders’ tasks and the behavior of leaders such as distinct traits that belong to leaders. The next section focuses on the first of the two aspects. It guides the reader towards a better understanding of how different generations perceive leadership.

In order to understand what individuals perceive as positive or negative leadership, my interview strategy was to ask for both negative and positive leadership experiences. I therefore asked the interviewees to share personal and detailed stories about why they perceived certain actions as positive or negative (e.g. “Can you tell me of a specific time when you have experienced good leadership?”). Hence, good and bad leadership were two main themes of the perception of leadership code. In total I identified six main themes connected to this theme: good leadership, bad leadership, managers vs leaders, admiration factor, communication factor and impact of leadership practices. Here, I will continue to focus on the two main themes, which are good and bad leadership. The first preconception I had was that direct questions about good and bad leadership would result in answers relating to specific traits or behaviors. For example, when asking; “What is good leadership?”, I thought I would receive answers such as “a good listener”. Likewise, when asking about bad practices, I might receive answers such as “a bad listener”. However, I learned that it was more about how interviewees felt when experiencing both bad and good leadership. Hence, often interviewees would not point out specific behaviors or actions connected to positive or negative leadership.

Good leadership and bad leadership were both present when asking general questions, as well as more personal experiences. After asking the general questions “Who is a leader to you?” and “What are three attributes that a leader should have and three a leader

should not have?”, the answers strongly reflected the negative and positive personal stories of the interviewees. Thus, I could see a strong connection between generalizing about leadership and personal experience. Hence, what we define as ideal leadership comes from good personal experiences and bad leadership comes from negative personal experiences. This effect was strikingly present, among both leaders and employees, and across all generations included in the study.

However, I could find factors linked to good and bad leadership by asking real life experiences. The strong focus of interviewees on personal experiences also strengthened the theme of admiration. This connection between personal experiences and generalization of leadership is related to the theme of admiration, which was defined when trying to understand what makes individuals perceive good leadership. Admiration concerns individuals' awareness (both leaders and employees) of their own limitations. Therefore, admiring leaders that possess these “missing” traits is common. Hence, I argue that admirable characteristics in others, as well as one's own flaws shape your view of how a leader should be. This theme was more existent among older individuals (maybe specify age). However, it was also present across different experience levels.

The generalizing that was common gave me the perception that, generally people believe leadership is not as personal and experience-based as theories would indicate. One of the methodological approaches of data collection in this research was based on initial general questions about the topic such as “What is a leader to you?”, before sharpening the focus, with questions such as “Can you tell me of a specific situation when you have experienced good leadership?”. The interviews themselves guided me to discover the substantial connection that personal experiences have on the generalization of the topic. This highlight will be discussed later on in the second part of the analysis.

5.1.2 Theme Highlights 1

- Personal experiences shape our perception of leadership and therefore our generalization of the topic of leadership
- Admiration for leaders based on self-reflection (skills we do not possess and we admire in others)

5.1.3 Other Themes

There are three other main themes belonging to the coding process of the interviews. These themes are: being a leader, a matter of age or experience and leadership practices. They guide us to understand insights about leadership in general and specifically to the case. Here I will present each one of them.

Being a leader differs from the code “perception of leadership” explained above because it focuses on the side of leaders. What does being a leader mean? What do leaders have to do to be considered as such? The theme helps us to understand and define the role of leaders and, most importantly, it helps us to understand if there are some specific behaviors or traits that the role of the leader is associated with. Thus, it explores a practical side that includes: tasks, challenges of the job, responsibilities. It explores a personal side; the motivations behind wanting to become a leader, fears, personal values and behavioral traits of leaders.

During the interviews I have noticed that less experienced employees, within all age groups, seem to have the expectation that a leader’s main responsibility is to lead them and make sure they perform. Employees seem to disregard that their leaders have their specific tasks to complete as well as leading the team. As this interview (leader #2): *“at the end of the day team performance is the leader's responsibility”* shows they expect their leader's focus to be towards them when instead a young leader explained that leaders have much more on their plate. This inconsistency shows a different set of values that belong to different leaders which could be explained by the different generations they belong to.

A matter of age or experience This research started with the assumption that different generations prefer different leadership styles. As previously mentioned, modern generations are commonly recognized to be a leadership “nightmare”. After conducting the first interviews, especially when talking to students, it was clear that not many felt classified based on their generations by others, rather their level of work experience. As student #2 explains: *“Maybe not my age but more my status as a student, let's say because*

I have been, let's say, contacted me several times because in the words of other people, I could bring let's say a fresh eyes to some situation". Hence, experience level is a factor that could reject my first assumptions that leadership should be shaped around generations to ensure a positive impact. Instead, a differentiation should be made on the basis of the level of experience. Therefore, it became one of the focuses of the coding process in order to discover what other factors impact the perception of leadership both positively and negatively.

Leadership practices Include codes specific to leadership as a practice within the case. It goes beyond attributes, behaviors and perception but looks at Nordea's internal practices. It includes practical information about leadership such as training, feedback and evaluation systems that the organisation follows. This code is specific to the organisation and it was defined to help understand what the leadership approaches are and styles that they want to promote across the organisation.

At Nordea, a substantial part of being a leader is being involved with feedback and evaluation processes for their employees and themselves. In fact, they assess performance based on feedback. Recently, Nordea has introduced a new evaluation scheme which gives employees an opportunity to set up their own personal and professional goals at the beginning of the year and to then track their development and performance based on the goals. This could be interpreted as a shift of leadership focus towards employee development (personal and professional goals), rather than solely performance (feedback system to assess performance). This suggests that the leadership style which they are trying to promote is shifting towards more modern leadership theories, concerned with the development of the individuals such as transformational leadership. This leadership focus rejects the case specific assumption that the traditional organisational setup of Nordea might "get in the way" of leadership practices. However, this new evaluation process was only mentioned by few graduates in higher positions, but was not described by students and the majority of graduates. I argue that the lack of awareness and implementation on the lower levels of this new system might be a result of the high degree of hierarchy or the matrix organisational set up.

Interestingly, when I asked leaders to describe the mandatory leadership training programme they attended, a divergent perception of the meaning of the training emerged. Some described them as people-focused and the others portrayed them as a set of practical tools to lead their team. This might suggest a lack of consistency of the leadership training or training that have a degree of flexibility to adapt to suit the audience. Therefore, it led to the impossibility to define a specific type of style that Nordea wants to promote across the organisation. Moreover, several leaders explained that the most valuable takeaway of these training sessions was connecting with other leaders and sharing their own experiences which they could then apply in working scenarios.

5.1.4 Theme Highlights 2

- Less experienced employees expect the focus of the leaders to be about employee needs and performance, conversely, the leaders interviewed articulated contrasting opinions.
- Younger generations (/less experienced individuals) were mainly positively impressed by how useful their lack of experience was to more experienced employees. Interviewees talked about the importance of “word of mouth” between leaders at the training events and often mentioned that it was the most valuable insight from the training.

5.2 Other Factors - Context

This theme represents other factors that play a role in leadership which are not related directly with generations. The existing theories point at generations to make sense of leadership and suggest what organizations and leaders should be like and what they should focus on with reference to generations. Since the aim of the research is to understand the relation between generations and leadership, I wanted to be certain to leave space to other explanations and factors by coding interviews with the theme of “other factors”.

These themes were defined as cultural differences, gender, Nordea's interests and perception of the organisation. This category challenges the initial assumption that individuals belonging to different generations should be led in different ways or indeed prefer different leadership practices according to the generational cohort they belong to. It is important to underline that the interview format was not set up with questions inherent to these factors, however there was a clear presence of them across multiple answers to questions about leadership and Nordea. The code regarding perception of gender inequality mainly came up when the interviewees were asked to describe a situation when age played a role during their work life (both young and old), women were mainly the ones to mention the gender factor. As shown in the quotes below the gender theme was vividly present in their daily work routines.

Graduate #1: *"I wouldn't say age, but gender for sure. Which was super annoying, because I don't know, I felt that some particular men would act like them stupid and I hate it so much. But I'm not sure. It may be hard to differentiate if it's, you know, because that was also a student. But I felt because I was a woman. But yeah, maybe it's not the clear line. Why it was it but that's how I felt. And I know that sometimes I would be, you know, one out of 50 people in the meeting and I was the only one woman and I was like, laughing Okay, this is also accomplishment. But, yeah, sometimes it feels just weird, but I also hope that people it's not gonna be in my cup. But yeah, based on some comments in the email, So yeah, people think I am stupid."*

Student #3 when asked if there is something she would change at Nordea she responded: *"I don't Really know, I've been on a project now, but it's about gender diversity. So for sure if I could choose, I would of course get more women into leadership positions maybe. And, and also like, it seems after looking into them to numbers, I feel like a lot of leaders are definitely named 50 years plus or last 50 or so little employees and up. So maybe get some fresh mind."*

In regards to the perception of the organisation, it was clear that employees belonging to lower hierarchical levels in the organisation were less aware of top management changes or official leadership practices. When I asked students to describe leadership practices at

Nordea they found it challenging to answer and also provided different types of responses. The students might suggest a high level of fragmentation between the different levels of the organisation, which supports my second assumption. The highly hierarchical structure of Nordea could “get in the way” of the perception of leadership around individuals belonging to different layers. Here are two of the quotes from students when asked about leadership practices at Nordea.

Student #2: *“Oh, okay. If, let's say that if we talk a bit in a textbook everyone just aims to achieve the only important things so like value for the costumers, and I guess whether like as the classic normal drive is what usually like drives management, also Nordea. How to describe I mean, I don't know if it's if it's relevant to this question, let's say but I would say it maybe and I noticed from other people, like other people saying this, but maybe the management in Nordea have a bit freq fermented, so too many levels too many layers and Very, sometimes very difficult to get there. They have a hard time communicating, like managers in general because either communication gets lost from the top, top management to a lower level management. So that's an issue.”*

Student #1: *“Um, I think it depends. There's quite a big gap between a my or at least my experience, the closest leaders you have and the kind of higher up management and because obviously you're, you're encouraged into interact quite often with your closest as manager, and so you do have kind of like one to ones and let that aspect. And then further out than that, I think it's very easy to lose track of the leaders in the organization because there are a lot”*

5.2.1 Theme Highlights 3

- Other factors that could play a role in the relationship between leadership and generations: level of experience, gender, culture, leader's connection to leading role.
- Lower level did not mention many organisational changes that happened while they were there and these changes were perceived and discussed in interviews with higher positions (from graduates up).

5.3 Analysis part 2 - data findings & theory

This section will walk the reader through an interpretation of the highlights presented above, in connection with the theories explained in the previous chapter. To answer the research question, I will now present the analysis through pre-existing theory. I will analyze theories in relation to the empirical material, aiming to show evidence about preferred leadership practices in relation to each generation. This approach is designed to provide evidence that might or might not challenge the initial assumptions and therefore answer the research question.

5.3.1 Great man theory & trait theory

The theme called “admiration factor” can be connected to some of the oldest leadership theories such as the great man and theories such as charismatic leadership. According to the theories, the figure of the leader is characterized by abilities and behavioral attributes that common individuals were lacking (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). During my interviews I have often come across descriptions of good leaders and descriptions of mentors as being people possessing skills and traits that the interviewee was missing or at least believed to be missing. When asked about personal experiences when good leadership was experienced the answer was:

Leader #6: *“So still showing vulnerability and doing your image strong and empowering way. And I think that that's very admirable. [...] That I probably would need to work more on if I were ever got in that situation where, you know, it's difficult to create the separation between, you know, between the emotional part of it and then the part where you're actually a leader, and you're there to be a role model for people as well as much as possible”*

When I asked the interviewee to explain further why they thought of that specific example this was the response:

Leader #6: *“Yeah, I think it's probably because it's the furthest away from mastering. So I think, let's say, Oh, this person was really great. communicating with people or whatever it is that I consider that I could be okay or pretty easily. And I don't necessarily see as much aspiration for me to try to emulate that. But when it's something where I would, if I put myself in those shoes, I think that I would be just completely terrible at it comparatively, then I definitely want to improve. I think it's probably the reason why it came to mind first. [...] So I think it often plays into the parts that you perceive weaknesses and expressed by someone that is really strong at that.”*

The empirical material supports both the great man theory and traits theory because of the perception that employees have on the existence of special skills that only certain individuals possess. People belonging to previous generations seemed to describe leaders as especially capable individuals. Interviewees that belong to different generations and across different experience levels for example employee Graduate #1, a 28 years old graduate.

The research presented a difference between previous and contemporary generations and their preferences with respect to leaders and their focus. The commonly named “soft-skills” were preferred across younger ages. According to the data, there was a difference in values in terms of what they wanted from their leader. From a charismatic figure, to a transformational and servant profile. From preferring skills such as charisma, to softer skills like communication and honesty. Moreover, the fact that performance of the team is connected with the figure of the leader or in other hands his responsibility of the leader. This concept is explained by Spector who brings Freud into frame, comparing the two theorists. In his paper, he describes Freud theory as humans having the primal need for parental figures to whom they offer dependence.

As graduate #1 explained: *“For me, true leaders are the one who supports me as a person more than actually an employee. And I don't think a lot of leaders are doing that. So for me, it's about support. It's also about the guidance [...]. They're looking after me, and that they feel that, you know, they will do whatever is necessary to help me. So for me those are true leaders who have that kind of relationship with me”*. She belongs to a different generation but working in lower position in the organisation. This enforces one of the main themes

that I have discussed in the previous section where I explain that experience plays a substantial role (a matter of Age or Experience).

Trait theory of leadership is based on personal qualities of the leader and how personalities play a role in leading styles. I have decided to use this theory because it is strongly connected with the code “behavioral traits” which were mentioned by both leaders and employees. Some believed that successful leaders were “born” with certain traits that were beneficial to lead others, however there were many controversial opinions about this when interviewees were challenged by questions such as “do you think that anyone could acquire these special personal skills?”. It was hard for them to define such traits in a more concrete manner and to point out what concrete actions, behaviors and skills these individuals had. The responses were quite split between people believing that leadership traits could be trained and developed, whilst the others supported the idea that these are skills people are born with. Trait theory of leadership suggests that leaders emerge from within a group, a concept that was proved by several leadership studies (Judge et al., 2002). Therefore, there are some personality traits that are commonly recognized and connected with leadership-like behavior such as charisma and confidence (Judge et al., 2002).

In contrast to leadership perception, which is the base of this theory, leadership effectiveness refers to the ability and success rate of leaders to influence and guide their team (Judge et al., 2002). This suggests that leaders success is directly mirrored with teams performance, thus, I interpret that a part of a leader’s responsibilities lie with their team performance and therefore their own evaluation as leaders should also consider this factor. This theory supports the differentiation of codes “perception of leadership” and “being a leader” by demonstrating the differences between perception of leaders by behavioral factors together with defining for some parts what leaders should be responsible for or at least what a leader should do. For example,. reaching objectives through influencing and guiding employees.

Leader #1, when asked what he would have wanted to know before starting his leadership career path, responded by stating the importance of taking notes throughout the quarters as a facilitation process when discussing evaluations of his employees. The

lowest ranked factors were openness and experience which appeared to be completely unrelated with leadership.

Maybe they define experience as “being an expert” which is supported by several interviews of leaders. They were afraid of not being expert enough before leading someone and they all agreed with being unnecessary to be a leader. As leader #6 explained: *“But I think in general, if I'm just trying to generalize the best for any team, I think it's important that you have the understanding that you're able to, because then you can have those conversations with people where you could be on the same, you know, sort of plane of communication and you can talk to each other. But at the same time, you don't have to be the best. You don't have to be, you know, the sort of subject matter expert, you have to trust that your people are the experts and they will make the decisions”*. Many leaders have emphasized the fact that they don’t need to be experts in the field but they just need to be aware of their employees and their capability although they might not have any experience in the field and job position themselves. The fact that they need to understand individual capabilities was present across all leaders interviews and it will be discussed as another characteristic of transformational leadership later on.

5.3.2 Transactional Leadership

As explained in the theory chapter, transactional leadership is based on cost-benefit exchanges between leaders and followers. Thus, a relationship that is based on a series of exchanges between parties (Den Hartog et al., 1997). This theory also believes that a transactional leader will compensate effectively for a deficiency when the environment fails to provide necessary motivation, direction and satisfaction.

Moreover, transactional leaders are the ones that set up performance expectations and a reward system that is related to the performance achievement (Den Hartog et al., 1997). Recently, Nordea has established a new goals and feedback system. It is based on the establishment of yearly targets from each employee for their own professional and personal goals for the year, agreed with their leader. Their evaluation will be based on these goals.. This set up goes against the general belief of transactional leadership theories. Thus, from an external point of view, I argue that the bank and its leadership

practices are more set up towards recent leadership theories such as transformational leadership. However, these new practices are only applied to certain levels of the organisation and not to all e.g. graduates but not students. Moreover, certain leaders use monetary reinforcement for good performance which is in line with transactional leaders. Such leaders believe that since it is a transactional relationship, performance should be rewarded with benefits such as money.

As employee #1 highlights: "don't get me wrong I also felt values before but to get this kind of bonus also, kind of like ehmm also has been also Because I have always had the feeling that I've been valued by my boss. But this was also a bonus that were by other leaders and from my own station should take that decision. So again, like also knowing that it's not only my boss that appreciates what I do, but also the other leaders in the organization that is kind of like that's pretty good especially as a student."

According to the data this approach resulted in high levels of performance and satisfaction from both the employee and the leader's perspective. This is reflected by the codes that I have established like feedback and performance during my research which are some of the main tasks that a leader has to complete according to the interviewees. Furthermore, it supports the presence of transactional leadership practices across the organisation as well as the presence of more transitional leadership styles. However, it also shows a fragmentation in practices across the organisation.

The transactional leader recognizes followers' needs to define the exchange process for meeting these needs, the theory is based on the mutual benefit from the exchange transaction between the two parties. Furthermore, this leadership style is based on bureaucratic authority that focuses on task completion and relies on performance systems of rewards and punishment (Gregory Stone et al., 2004) which is shown by the quote above from employee #1. This part of the theory suggests a connection with the highly hierarchical structure of the bank which is based on a substantial presence of authority layers and reward and punishment practices.

Moreover, a critique to these theories of transactional and transformational leadership is that they both share the main concern for the organisational objectives which makes it challenging to distinguish among the two.

5.3.3 Transformational Leadership

The dynamics between transformational leaders and their followers are based on a strong identification of their followers with them (Den Hartog et al., 1997). This was highly present across my interviews especially among lower organisational levels such as students and graduates. As the following quotes from both leaders and employees suggest:

Student #2: *"I think also the fact that my leader has been in my position as a student is a positive thing. So you know, kind of that can be like an inspiring task. We see progression as well, like where are people in my position have gone. I think key things are that kind of informal relationship that it's not so it doesn't feel so higher hierarchical."*

Student #3: *"I feel like different teams in Nordea could use different leaders. [...] Just looking at my team, with my leader, I feel like they've.. they've made a good choice with having a younger leader there. I feel he is very much on the same page as us and very many things also, because he's been a student there himself. Yeah. And so I feel like they've at least been doing a good job with finding a leader there. So hopefully, that also is the same in other parts that they have, like a different like, like a person type that fits with the rest of the team."*

Student #4: *"He doesn't mind at all, which makes it so much easier for us because he has experienced being a student. I mean, very recently he was a student. We replaced him after all. So he understands that if you need to move things around, move it around."*

Graduate #1: *"When I was working as a student [...] because my leader was in the same situation as I was before he was working as a student and he knew that you're not that all the time and you need some catching up after you are not been to the office few days. So he was he have empathy [...] I think because he was in the same situation mostly."*

Graduate #4: *"And I think what was nice today was that he was very encouraging in terms of like that it's normal to have these feelings, and he has been through it as well because he also started as a graduate. And just like he kind of you know assured me that it's normal to be in that position [...] it's nice to get that confirmation from your people either you know that this is actually like the way it is and the way it goes and the way it's supposed to be."*

Leader #1: *"So me also being a part of the student team at one point, and, you know, fulfilling a different role before stepping into this leadership role, I think helped me gain the perspective that the students currently have in the team and helps me empathize and relate."*

Leader #2: *"I was a graduate myself but also, of course, before taking this talk to a lot of my colleagues who are or have been leaders so To get an understanding of what it is and what it's what you are supposed to bring, or expected to bring."*

Based on the quotes presented above, employees belonging to lower levels have demonstrated an incredible awareness of the importance of having a leader connected to their role. It created a strong identification between employees and leaders and therefore a sense of connection and understanding. The higher in the organisation my interviewees were, the hardest it was to find this sense of connection. Instead, employees were describing their leaders with a strong sense of admiration based on characteristics they were admiring more than feeling this sense of connection. Thus, I have created the subcode of admiration which I will discuss further on in the analysis to group both aspects and find out more about them. This differentiation might be due to the fact that the higher in terms of organisational position I interviewed, the more dispersive and complex the organisation became (matrix org). Alternatively, it could come from the leading of more experienced employees, making it harder to relate to them due to the extensive work experiences that they had as leaders and managers and their distance from the 'bottom' of the hierarchy.

Leader #5: *"Yeah I have got two and then the two best leaders that I've ever worked for and I would work for them again, in a heartbeat. I try and pull the best of both of them together and then manage my team using the best of both of them."*

Leader #6: *"It is about the inspiration factor, I mean swinging when you see people that inspire people that are extremely great personalities out there, it's often also because I can't express myself that way or whatever it might be. So I think it often plays into the parts that you perceived. weaknesses and expressed by someone that is really strong at that."*

These interviews from leaders suggest that not only do people consider good leaders to be someone they admire, but also they reflect upon it and try to incorporate the skills and factors they admire into their own way of leading. This was mainly present in interviews of leaders talking about other leaders. The interviews and initial findings seem to convey a high correlation between what people perceive to be good leadership and their own personal experiences. I will now analyze further both quotes. I argue that the relationship between students and their leader was partially transformational. Sharing values such as honesty together with this sense of identification and the ability to inspire employees by creating a group that shares values and purpose are key elements that are connected with transformational leadership. Factors that result in a strong bond between members of the team and their leader. Transformational leaders transform personal values of their employees to support the vision and goals of the organisation by fostering an environment based on trust (Gregory Stone et al., 2004). This relates, like said before, to the leaders that set up an environment based on common values such as honesty.

Across the quotes presented above, there is a clear factor of admiration present. The inspirational and admirational tone in which ideals of leaders were described and the content of these interviews can be strongly related to older leadership theories such as the great man and trait theory. This supports the belief that previous generations do prefer less contemporary leadership styles. This evidence will guide us to answer the research question and understand what is the relation between generations and leadership styles. As mentioned above, these theories were based on the appraisal of individuals with skills and abilities uncommon to the majority of people. These "extraordinary" abilities can be connected with the admiration that some of the leaders

interviewed had towards their own leaders or mentors, by emphasizing abilities that they do not possess and that the leader had mastered. Thus, this code aims to interpret transformational leadership and also diverges from less experienced employees and leaders. As explained above, it was more present across experienced employees (which share similar ages) especially leaders looking at other leaders and mentors (that are leaders).

My research was designed for causal/explanatory factors to “independently” emerge from my study. According to the findings mentioned in the previous section students and graduates can be connected to and belong to the transformational leadership school. Both groups share this strong connection with their leaders and very positive leadership experiences in relations to the current leaders. No critiques could be interpreted from the data. However, we can not establish a direct connection between the satisfaction of the employees and transactional leadership practices. Taking a narrow look at the demographic among interviewees belonging to these two groups (students+leaders & graduates+leader) we can confirm that there was no correlation between nationality and gender since different nationalities and both females and males were involved in the research. However we can observe a common factor between groups: age groups (generations). In conclusion, there are several factors that can be connected with the positive feedback received by the students and the graduates.

Transformational leaders elevate the interests of followers, generate awareness and acceptance of the vision and mission of the group to motivate them to go beyond for the good of the group (Den Hartog et al., 1997). However this was not to be proven in my research, no data suggested that the transformational leaders that I have individuated did not fulfill this definition of transformational leadership. The employee did not mention a sense of purpose and mission. Also, when asked about the values of the company they did not relate to them or apply them. However we can not state for sure that it was not present, it was just not mentioned or discussed when they were asked about their daily operations and their leaders practices as well as from the leaders prospective.

Transformational leadership is built upon four dimensions: charisma, inspiration, individual consideration and intellectual stimulation (Den Hartog et al., 1997). In the method section, it is highlighted that these dimensions were considered when developing the questionnaire which was presented to the interviewees. As explained in the methodology, this was mainly a strategy to guide the interviewees to use adjectives and personal experiences to define good and bad leadership styles. This would make it possible to define what kind of leadership practices, according to the theories, are more suitable to certain individuals.

Studies have demonstrated that transformational leadership results in a higher rating of effectiveness and performance compared to transactional leadership. Considering the leader 1 and leader 2 to be transformational after the previous arguments, I can affirm that their respective employee felt satisfied with their leadership practices compared to previous ones profiled as transactional which was discussed in the previous section. Thus, I argue that transformational leaders have a positive impact on their employees in my case study, although more factors have to be considered such as age groups (generations).

Transformational leadership is a process of building commitment to organizational objectives and then empowering others to reach them (Gregory Stone et al., 2004). Although I have defined some of the leaders' profiles to be principally transformational, I have failed to notice a distinct and defined commitment to the organisation among younger age groups and lower experienced positions. It might be because of the general questions I have decided to ask related to experience and nothing specific about their motivations to perform. However, one of the full time employees (employee #3) when talked about feeling appreciated by comments and good leadership described a situation in which he was appraised by monetary bonus.

Since most of the interviewees answers were linked to their professional relationships with their own bosses, It could be that the main motivation for them to do a good job is more because of their leader and the personal connection with her or him, instead of what the theory of transformational leadership states. It could also be related to transactional leadership, on a personal level. Not because they are doing it in exchange

for something (e.g. salary and bonuses), but out of hope that they will get recognized by their boss. This was a highlight in my research. As most of all the interviewees I have spoken with, when asked about describing a time when they felt appreciated or a time that they have experienced good leadership, they often answered with the communicative appreciation of their leader. Moreover, when I asked a leader when they demonstrated to have done a good job as a leader they talked about feedback and communication.

Leader #6: *"I have one of my team members was in Sweden [...] I say maybe about a month into, into her existence into the team. Someone else in Sweden who's not on my team, who I don't know very well actually contacted Me and wrote me an email to say that he had he had gone to meet with that person in the office and they had a talk and that he just wanted to let me know that there was really positive feedback coming out of, you know, the way that the team is functioning and how it's being set up, and so on. So he actually just reached out on his own to give me that feedback. And I thought that was really nice. So, of course, as someone who is just starting out with this new team, there are a lot of things that you're not entirely sure whether everyone is happy with or not. So it's good to hear. You know, the opinion of an independent person, so not someone who feels like they need to tell you something positive because you're their leader from the outside."*

Avolio (in Gregory Stone et al., 2004) defined four main behaviors that constitute transformational leadership: idealized influence (charismatic influence), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. These factors were of fundamental importance to profile the leaders. Some fitted most of these categories, while others were only connected with one of them. Thus, this source supports my previous argument that leaders can simultaneously fit more than one leadership style. The ones that were most recognizable were intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, in fact many leaders interviewed demonstrated to fulfill these criterias. For the charismatic attributes that transformational leaders should possess, how they influence their employees as a sort of personal power (Hu et al., 2015) is related to the questionnaire adjectives as well as the interview questions based on personal traits of the leader that they define to be good and bad. There were very few that used words such as charismatic, the majority talked about the importance of communication and

appreciation. In fact, as the quote above proposes, appreciation felt like they were doing a great job because of the unofficial feedback received.

Transformational leadership should be promoted across organisations by enterprise leaders continuously enhancing their skills and enriching theoretical knowledge to be able to impress and therefore influence people, which is one of the main abilities of transformational leaders (Hu et al., 2015). They also agree with others theories that transformational leaders should be able to articulate a clear vision and purpose of the team in regard to organisational objectives. Bass (2000) defines transformational leadership to be related with behaviors such as role modelling, risk sharing, charisma as well as intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation which includes clear communication of goals and expectations (Berson & Linton, 2005). Extensive research of qualitative, quantitative and meta analysis resulted in a higher level of satisfaction of the employees. Moreover, Bass (2000) affirmed that transformational leadership has a higher prediction of both organisational and individual performance across multiple factors such as culture, org levels and type of jobs. This source specifies the adaptability of this theory also in accordance to the demographic factors that I am analyzing. This resulted to be a guidance for the analysis of the empirical material because of the high presence of this multipl factors across the data.

The transformational model of leadership was conceptualized by Bass and Riggio as inspiring and stimulating for followers to achieve extraordinary outcomes and develop their own leadership skills (Ahn et al., 2004). Another fundamental characteristic of this leadership style is the ability to create in their followers a sense of self-worth to engage and create true commitment and genuine involvement of the employees (Ahn et al., 2004). This is very much present in some of the interview such as employee #3 where he talks about his leaders as someone that values him and pushes him to do the best he can.

5.3.4 Servant Leadership

Servant leadership develops around the focus of others rather than upon self and on the understanding of the role of the leader as a servant (Gregory Stone et al., 2004). Thus, a leader should never be motivated by self-interest when leading others. Servant

leadership was not highly observed in the analysis of my interviews except for a few which were familiar with the concept themselves just like leader #6 mentioned: *“So, people talk a lot about servant leadership, as well. I think that that's also something that makes sense, especially in a place like the Nordics. I think it's very different in North America and my experiences there, it's a lot more hierarchical in that sense and here, it's just, you know, flattened out more, but I like that. I think it's good that we can all just, we all have different roles. It's not because one person is a leader they have a better role”*.

In reality, there were several examples that proved that this leadership profile is not highly present within the case and this is supported by leaders affirming that they became leaders because it was the next career step that they were supposed to follow. Accordingly, leader #1 said: *“be introduced to being a leader and having a kind of a playground to develop those leadership skills, because doing so with students is I think a good introduction to that. Before taking the next step, you know, being a leader for a specialist is being a leader for experts”*. Thus, accepting a leadership position based on the self centered mindset of the person's own career advancement goes against the servant leadership profile that we have come to know. Therefore, this is one of the many answers that supports my statement that the case study does not provide evidence of Servant leadership across the hierarchies that I have analyzed.

Moreover, servant leaders are not primarily concerned with the corporation and organizations rather they value the people that compose them. This is a very hard factor to find, many leaders have explained their actions based on the purpose connected to the wellbeing of the company (Gregory Stone et al., 2004). This behavior is highly tangible for employees and also one of the factors that younger employees do not appreciate. As the following quote describes, many criticisms were made to leaders that were driven by organisational performance instead of focusing on employees, their needs and their goals.

Graduate #4: *“We felt like she was a little bit too much on the side of you know.. the company and the interest of the company. And not really like pursuing, and supporting our own interests [...]. So, and one actually is our colleague. He resigned after a month from the graduate program, and like the combination of, you know, factors, where because he was*

told that he was not going to be able to go to the place he wanted to go. And he really didn't appreciate her leadership skills and she really didn't make him feel like she was there for him and they could figure it out together, and he had other job opportunities so he was just like, you know, I'm, I'm out of here."

Some of the key takeaway about this leadership theory is self-giving and not self-glory which can be described with the following quote. Leader #2, when asked about the time that she demonstrated to be a good leader responded: *"Yeah, in general, I think I'm a good leader, because I am quite, it is not important for me to shine in that role. It is much more important for me that my, the people around me shine."* She told a story of when one of her employees asked for advices and she let her take full ownership on the task. She explained that enhancing a learning environment is one of the most important part of being a leader. She explains: *"A but the big difference here was that that the way, the way I managed to do this, I made her take ownership of it and I didn't over-rule her or made it easy for her in any way. And it changed her in a way that you can actually still see today because she's extremely. She believes in herself and she is extremely strong in discussions because she knows if she prepares in the right way she can make a difference."* These quotes support

Empowerment, total equality, team building and participatory management are the ideals on which servant leadership is based on (Page & Wong, 2000). This theory of leadership promotes a sense of community and shares between leaders and followers the power of decision making. These ideals were strongly present among students and partially graduates. They talked about team building especially when asked how they would motivate their employees if they were leaders, practices that can be related to community building (or a consequence). *"The primary purpose of a servant leader is to serve others by investing in their own development and well-being for the benefit of accomplishing goals and for the common good (Page & Wong, 2000).* The traditional notion of servanthood does not qualify you as a servant leader. They are leaders that are not motivated by self-serving purpose but yet the genuine desire to serve others and enable them.

An interesting part of servant leadership theories is the fact that these leaders are excellent managers but how they achieve it or the way they do it is purely shaped by who

they are (Page & Wong, 2000). Thus, this theory suggests that servant leadership can not be encouraged and enhanced by certain frameworks to follow or training to attend. In fact, character is central to this type of leaders instead of the traditional leaders' profiles which were based on command-and-control an approach based on tasks and processes (Page & Wong, 2000). This concept does not support high hierarchical structures which are often characterized by performance based evaluations and reward systems such as transactional leadership. Both students and graduates and other employees (no gender or nationality differences) underlined, based on their personal experience, the negative impact that these performance based practices and evaluations have over their motivation as well as their imprecision.

Graduates or students believed in the inaccuracy of this performance based system since it is not only one specific task they should be evaluated on instead an important part of the job is also to keep up team spirit. Some of the "negative" leadership approaches were linked with performance based review approaches. There are certain tasks and skills which are identified with leadership and management such as initiating, visioning, decision-making and implementing. Some of the most recent studies have identified two major dimensions of leadership: task-orientation and people orientation (Page & Wong, 2000).

Leadership styles should be connected with different situations, in fact, emergency-like situations will require instant decision making which is more typical from managers than leader (Hu et al., 2015). This argument is highly supported by some of my interviews such as the one with leader #6 where she suggests that during this crisis time of 2020 with the pandemic around us she has observed managers behaviors coming up more than leaders. She believes that they are more "useful" than leaders at this particular moment when operations have to be carried on.

Servant leadership is one of the most recent theories recognized and applied on a global scale. However, since it can not be trained, organizations should rethink their organisational attitude as "The glue is made up of a sense of common identity, linked to a common purpose and fed by an infectious energy and urgency" (Page & Wong, 2000).

Across my research this was observable on the lower hierarchical levels where as previously mentioned employees identify with their leader.

Stephen Covey (1998) describes leadership to be based on inner motivation that is unified to achieve a common purpose by sharing a vision and inspiring people by doing so and enhancing individual unique talents by fostering an environment like this. An example of this can be found in one of the interviews where a leader #6 enables others by giving the possibility and time to each team member to focus on interesting topics that they are passionate about to then share it with the rest of the team and letting them lead the conversation. Servant leadership is considered to be one of the most effective leadership practices due to the spreading of this sense of common purpose and goal which enables to reach goals. This argument does not support transactional and transformational leadership theories where even if understanding employees and their values they focus on performance as well.

According to the conceptual framework to measure servant leadership there are four dimensions: character orientation, people orientation, task orientation and process orientation. The first is concerned to assess the attitude of the servant leader which should reflect integrity, humility and servanthood. The second is about the concern of developing human resources they have which is demonstrated with care, empowerment and development of others. Task-orientation focuses on the achievement of productivity and success which is demonstrated with goal setting, leading and visioning. Lastly, process orientation is concerned with the efficiency of the organisation, the servant leader should demonstrate the ability to model and develop a flexible, efficient and open system based on shared decision making and team building (Page & Wong, 2000). Let's compare this servant leadership framework to assess which leaders have demonstrated to fit the categories. Only leader #2 has partially demonstrated to possess some of these dimensions; this is also supported by Page and Wong (2000) defining some of the typical characteristics of servant leaders being listening, empathy, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and community building. Awareness was one of the factors that I believe was the hardest for leaders to define, awareness of what they are good but principally what they are not good at and this might also be caused by the broken feedback and evaluation system across the

bank. Leader #2 demonstrated a high level of awareness of her own limitations. The most interesting part is that when students and graduates were describing ideal leaders they have shown to be highly interested in a leader that permits them and pushes them to grow both personally and professionally and also interested to invest in community building activities. Supporting the idea that modern generations do prefer certain leadership styles over others.

5.3.5 Theories on Generations & Leadership

Many theorists have been associating the concepts of generations and leadership, the main arguments relate to understanding leadership processes and performance in accordance with generational preferences (Rudolph et al., 2018). However as explained in the limitation chapter, there are very divergent and some incompatible theories around this concept, mainly for the numerous age groups belonging to different generations depending on what source was used. Leadership literature describes younger generations to be motivated by flexible working hours, informal communication, service ethic and environment and just the right amount of supervision (Rudolph et al., 2018). These are factors that were generally described across these theories. Throughout my research, of those elements, communication together with flexible working hours was nominated by every single interview of students as well as most of the graduates, thus they resulted to be part of the honesty and informality subcodes. However, the other factors were not mentioned within the case study. This is supported by the following quotes:

Student #1: *"I would always... I expect like honest communication without however like the maybe the idea of a boss that we had from the past so like the boss that hardly says, not hardly but just says you do this or you do that, and I am the one just telling what to do. So I would expect my clients communication but also you know, like the maybe also like the, I would expect my leader to share. Also, it's his or her worry is he's concerned not only like just supporting and stuff of course support but I would like to have a communication and collaboration on my same level."*

Student #2: *"Communication is key. [...]I'm really happy with my current leader is really easy to interact with. And I think it's quite an informal, like relationship to, like in terms of the leader, Jr. relationship, which is positive, at least in my perspective, because it's easy to talk."*

Graduate #3: *"They should be honest, clear communicator and supportive."*

Graduate #1: *"So just being there and communicate, you know, what is happening and having understanding that it's hard, saying that, you know, you will be there for them if it's needed to, they want to talk. So feeling also approachable. And if it's something good that we have done, then you know, communicating get the team performed very well, you know, thank you for your efforts"*

A second element that was often mentioned is the flexibility at work that is wanted by younger age groups. The ability to be flexible, especially for students working part time and also the possibility to work from home is a substantial interest across the youngest age group interviewed. This assumption is supported by the following quotes.

Student #5: *"because we're students and sometimes it's it's important, we can be flexible and shift our days around if needed. She didn't like that which made it more difficult as well. So we're versus like planning, planning our calendar a month in advance, and she expected that to sort of be set in stone almost. Which was also it's just a bad fit because sometimes if I had a slump, like I finished my work during week one, for instance, I finished my tasks. And I was supposed to go into the office tomorrow or whenever, Monday and it was Friday, and I hadn't really received anything else to do then I will I move my Monday to maybe Wednesday to just give it a few more days. So, work could come into my inbox right? And she was always she never liked that. T. doesn't mind at all, which makes it so much easier for us because she has experienced being a student. [...] He understands that which has improved things a lot, at least for me because I was also very unhappy with my previous leader."*

Lifespan perspective believes that development entails both continuous and discontinuous processes which mean cumulative and emergent and therefore no age

period is super to others (Rudolph et al., 2018). While a few researchers have applied this theory to better understand relations between leadership and age, it is clear that the dominant approach that researchers have applied to understand and explain leadership is generationalized thinking (Rudolph et al., 2018). Characterized by very strong assumptions of generations' ability to influence leadership processes and outcomes, based on the argument that individuals belonging to different generations will require different forms of leadership to achieve performance (Rudolph et al., 2018). This research was based on the assumption that generations do play a role in leadership and that most likely younger generations will value and prefer a certain leader profile. This common misconception was built upon numerous sources such as Harvard Business Review often linking generations with leadership.

The fact that leaders don't really agree on what their responsibilities are like, if team performance is part of their responsibilities signals a high level of not transparency within the organisation unit that I have studied. Thus, Nordea before focusing on leadership trainings on certain type such as transformational which some of the interviewees underlined that they are doing, they should focus on spreading awareness across leaders of what their responsibilities should be and also based on the survey there was a high level of heterogeneity on how they split their time which should also be of concern for the bank.

6. Discussion

In this section I will now summarize the five key findings of the research. The order in which I will present them is based on different themes that were part of the research and are the following: generations, leader interviewees, interviewees, Nordea and other factors that played a role.

6.1 About generations

One of the findings is that the coding process has not demonstrated many similarities among generations in regards to leadership styles. Although younger generations seem to prefer values like honesty and communication and they seemed to share the same leadership preferences, the higher in the organisation I went, the harder it was to find generations that shared the same preferences. I argue that this might not be due to generations per se but due to the level of professional experience the interviewees possess. Inexperienced individuals seemed to share more of the same leadership preferences compared to the ones that had more professional experience and therefore a broader variety of different leaders themselves. This argument is also supported by the fact that good and bad leadership was highly related and explained by individuals' personal experiences. Leadership is therefore a personal and reflective subject which resulted to be challenging to understand if not explained by specific contextualized experiences. This claim is endorsed by the choice of the sample which was selected to offer a multitude of different ages among people belonging to the same organisational

position. This aim to discover similarities and dissimilarities across generations resulted in the discovery that people understand leadership based on their personal experience.

This argument that the perception of leadership is highly based on personal experience also goes back to my critique to generational theories used by scholars to explain leadership. Many theories and recent articles are developed around the topic of millennials at the workplace, but is it really a matter of generation? Would creating a guideline on how to lead millennials really be the answer to leaders' trouble? As mentioned above, generations did not seem to be the key concept behind leadership within my research. However, what was shared across all generations and organisational layers was the wish to feel appreciated and considered by leaders. Hence, the leadership theories that have shaped the initial hypothesis of this research were outshined by the importance of basic “needs” that all interviewees shared, such as for example the ability of leaders to actively communicate appreciation. Therefore, I argue that I have not encountered a specific differentiation between preferred way of leading and generations.

6.2 About Leader Interviewees

This section will present key insights and reflections specifically related to interviewing leaders. While conducting interviews with leaders, I have noticed that the more interviewees belonged to higher positions the more likely they were to generalize and talk about a predefined concept of leadership. These concepts include how leaders should be and what it means to be a leader. As I noticed that it was hard to get specific examples from these more senior leaders about their own experiences and personal stories I decided to challenge them more during the interviews. I therefore used a series of follow up questions to have them open up a bit more. But still, it was hard to break their mental schemes. I was only able to overcome this issue by challenging them to refer to real life events, which helped me gain more valuable insights about the topic. This finding supports my previous argument that leadership is indeed based on our personal experiences. These experiences and an increased knowledge of the topic might then at some point be transformed into some perceived absolute truth that individuals believe to be true for everyone. This is a key finding, as the generalization of leadership that

individuals made based on their own personal experiences shapes their way of leading but disregards the subjective opinion of others about the topic. This objectified view therefore “imposes” the leaders’ personal belief about leadership on others.

I believe that if leaders would create an environment of open communication, where their employees can share their belief of what good and bad leadership is, this could help them to let go of these mental schemes. Thereby, leaders would challenge their assumptions, as well as improve their own leadership skills and could therefore better match their leadership style to each team or person they lead.

6.3 About interviewees

The main aspect to highlight about the interviewees I had the pleasure to speak to is connected to their difference in backgrounds and the department they belong to. Interviewees having different backgrounds (education, gender) seemed to have different leadership preferences. Gender will be discussed further together with other factors. Moreover, the fact that the interviewees all belong to different teams but are part of a specific department within the organisation (IT department) could have had an effect on study and is therefore worth mentioning. This and other factors could play a role in leadership and generations specifically regarding the case study of Nordea and are thus aspects that should be researched further and considered in the studies of generations and leadership.

6.4 About Nordea

Here I will reflect on some of the highlights specifically concerning the case study of Nordea. I have noticed that there were very different perceptions of the company’s values when asking “Which value do you think is used by colleagues around you?” or “Do you see these values being present around you and if yes which one?”. Moreover, individuals belonging to lower levels did not mention many organisational changes that happened while they were employed at Nordea. These changes were mentioned and extensively discussed in interviews with higher positions (graduates and higher). This supports the

second assumption of the research that Nordea's hierarchical structure might impose a more traditional leadership style. Thus, the lower in the organization the interviewees are, the less information was shared with them. This increasing lack of transparency, the further you go down the organizational chart, supports my argument that Nordea has a more traditional organisational structure where decisions are made by top management.

In addition, leaders who were asked to describe leadership training seemed to have a very divergent perception of what the training was about. This might be due to the weak consistency of training type (of specific leadership styles) or just the different interpretations of what the training consisted of. One of the most interesting aspects about discussing training was the fact that no matter what the training was exactly about, leaders described the most valuable take away to be the exchange of opinions between the different participants during the training. Thus, people recognize value in the exchange of stories and opinions that the others have to share. This supports what I explain in the previous paragraph about holding on to beliefs about the right way of leading, which can be challenged and sometimes improved through others' opinions.

6.5 Factors that play a role

Next to the aspects mentioned above, I will now introduce and describe a list of other factors that seem to be important.

6.5.1 Experience

Experience was one of the most highlighted factors in this study. The fact that leadership would be explained by personal experience could be more significant than looking at the phenomenon of leadership with the generational lens. This does not mean that leadership and generation are not related with each other. However, one of the main explanatory factors of this relationship between leadership and generations might be the experience aspect. As previously explained, the level of experience of each individual could oftentimes be the main reason for how a leader leads. Because of his or her previous experience (leaders they had themselves and people they have led), their leadership practices were shaped. Thus, I believe that the aspect of experience should not be

disregarded when studying and explaining the relation between generations and leadership.

6.5.2 Culture

Culture is another aspect that was explicitly mentioned by internationals working in Denmark, as well as by Danish leaders working with a team abroad (e.g. Poland). This suggests that leadership and its practices are also based on culture and that culture shapes people's communication and actions in the workplace. As mentioned in the analysis, leaders recognized a higher level of difficulty in leading people belonging to different cultures because of their traditional hierarchical set up which led to a very formal working relationship. Hence, I believe that culture plays a role in leadership and therefore leaders should be aware of working differences and "unwritten rules" that cultures bring when leading an international team. This is another aspect that challenges more senior leaders to overcome certain mental schemes about leadership. I would therefore propose that especially for more senior leaders it could be beneficial to give them more diverse teams where different cultures come together.

6.5.3 Type of employees

As explained above, the fact that this study is conducted with people belonging to a specific (and more technical) side of the organization might have played a role in the understanding of leadership. During the interviews, leaders also mentioned the difference in leading white collar employees and technical skilled employees. Thus, it should be regarded that leaders themselves differentiate between leading a certain type of employees. Also here I see an opportunity to overcome strong hierarchies and maybe enable leaders to switch between more and less technical teams.

6.5.4 Gender

Gender was another factor which was present across my research. Women belonging to different organisational positions mentioned the challenges of being women in a traditional business setting. As mentioned during the analysis, female employees

sometimes felt that there was a gender inequality in terms of numbers. For example, they have found themselves in meetings where they were the only female in the room. Oftentimes, interviewees made a differentiation when talking about female and male leaders. Male leaders when describing female leaders had a conception of women leading differently than men. It was mentioned that they perceived that female leaders had the tendency to demonstrate “male-like” behavior. Hence, I argue that gender should also be considered when studying leadership and generations, since it was a theme that was not planned to be research yet was strongly present across the study.

6.5.5 Understanding the employee perspective

One of the most interesting factors was the awareness that employees had of their leaders being connected with their own role as an employee. In fact, the majority of graduates explained that the good leadership practices from their leader were based on the fact that the leader was a graduate him or herself before leading the team. This was also supported by the leaders' own responses, where they said that they would know how to lead the graduates, because they themselves were graduates before. This connection between leader and leading role was present across generations as well as different organisational positions which supports my argument that the level of experience might be a more reliable factor to understand leadership instead of focusing on generations. Moreover, another aspect that I have underlined in the analysis is the fact that no matter what generations individuals belong to they all shared the common desire to feel appreciated by their leaders and for the leader to communicate this appreciation.

7. Conclusion

This thesis analyzed the relationship between different leadership styles and generations. The goal was thereby to find out if and how different generations should be led in different ways. The two underlying assumptions were that different generations match with specific leadership styles and that in the specific case study of the rather hierarchical company Nordea, more traditional leadership styles might prevail. The answer, based on my research, is that there is no clear relationship between generations and preferred leadership styles. A lot of recent literature highlights the difference of millennials compared to other generations and explains that they require a completely different work setting. Yet, these sources are often contradicting and while some sources just state that millennials prefer a predictable and safe environment, others generalize that they lack work ethics and loyalty or even tend towards narcissism. So is leadership a matter of generations?

Despite the original assumption, generations seemed not to be the factor that affected leadership preferences the strongest. While it was on the one hand difficult to inquire about this relationship due to the broad heterogeneity of existing sources about generations, my research also showed on the other hand that other factors are more important. The personal stories that people told, no matter their age, showed from an emotional perspective what they perceived as good or bad leadership. I can therefore conclude that leadership seems a strongly subjective topic that is mostly impacted through personal experiences.

In order to understand the relationship between leadership and generations, individuals' own perceptions of leadership were the main aspect of consideration. The thesis therefore looked at existing leadership theories first in order to summarize different leadership styles. The study was thereby based on theories of leadership such as transformational and servant leadership, theories on generations as well as leadership specifically explained by generational theories. In order to better answer the research question, these theoretical summaries were then used to analyze the data from the interviews, conducted with employees and leaders of the case company Nordea. The extensive material collected led to insightful information about the topic. Since leadership is a very reflective and personal subject, I needed to conduct in-depth interviews with each individual in order to better understand their perception of the topic and therefore what led them to perceive leadership the way they do. The empirical material was analyzed by developing codes which were based on existing leadership and generational theories such as 'behavioral traits'.

While conducting these interviews at the Nordea, the company structure played a big role and seems to strongly impact the topic of leadership. On the one hand, looking at a rather traditional and hierarchical company had a strong effect on what people perceived as good leadership. On the other hand, the aspect that employees often stayed after being in a graduate position and became leaders themselves, had an impact on their understanding of how to lead people. This is also in line with the main finding that the topic of leadership is mostly affected through personal experiences: when experiencing the same situation first from an employee's point of view and then from a leader's point of view, this strongly influenced interviewees' opinions.

It can therefore be concluded that for leaders it is crucial to both be aware of this subjectivity of the topic of leadership and to understand general needs that people across generations have when it comes to leadership. Companies could support this development for example by leadership training or by their hiring processes. However, as the research showed, especially more senior leaders often have clear preconceptions of what good leadership is. Based on the interview data, it could therefore be beneficial to for example:

- Set up discussion rounds with other leaders across the company

- Enable leaders to lead cross-cultural teams to help them challenge preconceptions
- Let leaders switch between more and less technical teams to understand that there are different needs in terms of good leadership.

These or similar measures could help leaders to understand how subjective the topic is and could help them to adapt their own leadership style more easily to any team they lead.

Leadership is and will always be important. Therefore studying it and understanding how to successfully lead people is crucial for organizations' success. Further research on the topic of leadership and generations should focus on understanding what could be additional factors that could better explain preferences for leadership styles. Thus, leadership scholars instead of explaining leadership only from a generational point of view should consider factors such as personal experiences, identity and culture. Moreover, gender is a theme that was highly present in the research, although no question during my interviews was directly asking about it. Therefore, it might be interesting to inquire on how gender shapes leadership in terms of female leaders feeling like they have to act more manly to gain respect. As some women feel that they start from a "lower" level/ quality of leadership just because they are women, this would be an interesting aspect to investigate. Another side about generational and leadership studies that is yet to be explored is the element of quantitative research. I believe that leadership studies in general but especially generational studies about leadership lack quantitative research. This method could thereby bring new valuable insights that qualitative research might not provide, especially related to correlations between certain aspects such as generations, gender or experience and specific leadership preferences.

There are a lot of articles highlighting that new generations like millennials require very different working conditions. Nevertheless, this thesis contributes by showcasing that generations are neither the only nor the most important aspect to consider when studying leadership. Especially, as it seems that generations cannot be segmented very precisely, they might not be the best basis to generalize on. As scientific sources about generations are either non-existent or contradicting I would propose to use other aspects to inquire more about the topic of leadership.

8. Bibliography

- Adrian, W., & Len, T. W. (2006). The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research (3rd ed.).
European Journal of Marketing, 40(9/10), 1145–1147.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560610681050>
- Ahn, M. J., Adamson, J. S. A., & Dornbusch, D. (2004). From Leaders to Leadership:
 Managing Change. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 10(4), 112–123.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/107179190401000409>
- Bartlett, C., & Ghoshal, S. (1990). Matrix Management: Not a Structure, a Frame of Mind.
Harvard Business Review, July-Augus. [https://hbr.org/1990/07/matrix-](https://hbr.org/1990/07/matrix-management-not-a-structure-a-frame-of-mind)
[management-not-a-structure-a-frame-of-mind](https://hbr.org/1990/07/matrix-management-not-a-structure-a-frame-of-mind)
- Bass, B. M. (1990). From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share
 the vision. *Organizational Dynamics*, 18(3), 19–31. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-](https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616(90)90061-S)
[2616\(90\)90061-S](https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616(90)90061-S)
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational Leadership* (2nd, revised ed.).
 Psychology Press, 2006.
- Berson, Y., & Linton, J. D. (2005). An examination of the relationships between
 leadership style, quality, and employee satisfaction in R&D versus administrative
 environments. *R and D Management*, 35(1), 51–60.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9310.2005.00371.x>
- Bloomberg, L., & Volpe, M. (2012). Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation: A
 Roadmap from Beginning to End. In *Completing Your Qualitative Dissertation: A*
Roadmap from Beginning to End. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452226613>
- Borgatta, E. F., Bales, R. F., & Couch, A. S. (1954). Some Findings Relevant to the Great
 Man Theory of Leadership. *American Sociological Review*, 19(6), 755.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2087923>
- Burns, L. R., & Wholey, D. R. (1993). ADOPTION AND ABANDONMENT OF MATRIX

- MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS: EFFECTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERORGANIZATIONAL NETWORKS. *Academy of Management Journal*, 36(1), 106–138. <https://doi.org/10.2307/256514>
- Colbert, A. E., Judge, T. A., Choi, D., & Wang, G. (2012). Assessing the trait theory of leadership using self and observer ratings of personality: The mediating role of contributions to group success. *Leadership Quarterly*, 23(4), 670–685. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.03.004>
- Den Hartog, D. N., Van Muijen, J. J., & Koopman, P. L. (1997). Transactional versus transformational leadership: An analysis of the MLQ. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 70(1), 19–34. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1997.tb00628.x>
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), 219–245. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405284363>
- Gregory Stone, A., Russell, R. F., & Patterson, K. (2004). Transformational versus servant leadership: A difference in leader focus. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 25(4), 349–361. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730410538671>
- Hosking, D. M. (1988). ORGANIZING, LEADERSHIP AND SKILFUL PROCESS. *Journal of Management Studies*, 25(2), 147–166. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.1988.tb00029.x>
- Hu, D., Zhang, B., & Wang, M. (2015). A Study on the Relationship among Transformational Leadership, Organizational Identification and Voice Behavior. *Journal of Service Science and Management*, 08(01), 142–148. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jssm.2015.8117>
- Judge, T. A., Bono, J. E., Ilies, R., & Gerhardt, M. W. (2002). Personality and leadership: A qualitative and quantitative review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(4), 765–780. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.4.765>
- Kirkpatrick, S. A., & Locke, E. A. (1991). Leadership: do traits matter? *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 5(2), 48–60. <https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.1991.4274679>
- Kvale, S. (2011). Introduction to Interview Research. *Doing Interviews*, 2–10. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849208963.n1>
- Larson, E. W., & Gobeli, D. H. (1987). Matrix Management: Contradictions and Insights. *California Management Review*, 29(4), 126–138.

- <https://doi.org/10.2307/41162135>
- Lester, S. W., Standifer, R. L., Schultz, N. J., & Windsor, J. M. (2012). Actual Versus Perceived Generational Differences at Work: An Empirical Examination. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 19(3), 341–354.
- <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051812442747>
- Mannheim, K. (1952). The sociological problem of generation. *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge*, 163–195.
- Nordea. (2020). *Annual Report 2019*.
- Okros, A. (2020). Post-Millennials in The Workplace. In *Harnessing the Potential of Digital Post-Millennials in the Future Workplace* (pp. 137–154). Springer.
- https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-25726-2_7
- Olaniyan, O. S. (2017). Authentic Leadership, Psychological Capital, and Employees' Well-Being. In *The Positive Side of Occupational Health Psychology* (pp. 45–64). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-66781-2_5
- Page, D., & Wong, P. (2000). A conceptual framework for measuring servant leadership. *The Human Factor in Shaping the Course of ...*, May, 69–110.
- Parry, E., & Urwin, P. (2011). Generational Differences in Work Values: A Review of Theory and Evidence. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(1), 79–96.
- <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2010.00285.x>
- Rudolph, C. W., Rauvola, R. S., & Zacher, H. (2018). Leadership and generations at work: A critical review. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 29(1), 44–57.
- <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2017.09.004>
- Salahuddin, M. M. (2010). Generational Differences Impact On Leadership Style And Organizational Success. *Journal of Diversity Management (JDM)*, 5(2), 1–6.
- <https://doi.org/10.19030/jdm.v5i2.805>
- Schultze, U., & Avital, M. (2011). Designing interviews to generate rich data for information systems research. *Information and Organization*, 21(1), 1–16.
- <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoandorg.2010.11.001>
- Spector, B. A. (2014). Carlyle, Freud, and the Great Man Theory more fully considered. *Leadership*, 12(2), 250–260. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1742715015571392>
- Stein, J. (2013). *Millennials: The Me Me Me Generation*.
- <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2143001,00.html>
- Yammarino, F. J. (1993). Transforming leadership studies: Bernard Bass' leadership and

performance beyond expectations. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 4(3-4), 379-382.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843\(93\)90043-S](https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(93)90043-S)

9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix I: Interview Transcripts

9.1.1 Interview with Anna

Thu, 6/4 11:27AM • 46:26

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

leader, work, feel, rotation, perform, responsible, people, problem, bad, good, moment, feedback, onpoint, reach, advice, communicate, employee, transparent, caring, situation

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:00

Okay, so ah, let's start with this. Do you remember your first day of work? And can you tell me a little bit about it?

Speaker 1 00:11

Yes, it was strange. It's a new environment, new people. You're not sure. What's your role there? What you're going to do? What are your thoughts? I think you're mostly confused. What are you doing there?

federica giuseppini 00:28

You started as a student, right?

Speaker 1 00:30

Yes, I started as a student TOS. Yes. I don't know. What else. Do you want me to elaborate more?

federica giuseppini 00:41

No, yeah, don't worry. It's just through to get some info flow going. And what were you looking forward when you gotta accept? I mean, when you got into

Speaker 1 00:52

What I was looking for. I was not sure. I think I'd primarily started working because I needed to Money and I start my studies within technology. And then I was looking for something that it

could be relevant to my studies. But since I have a business background, I was not quite sure what I'm looking for because I was not very familiar with technology in general. So I had open mind to see what was going to happen. So I can't say that I had the huge expectations. I was just hoping that I will understand what is going on. But that did not become any easier until today. So still equally challenging every day. Sometimes I'm really questioning if my career choice isn't good.

federica giuseppini 01:52

Maybe it will become more clear. I really hope

Speaker 1 01:56

I really hope, because you know, as a student, you are There are two days and then you are always feeling okay, maybe I'm not here all the time. So, you know, maybe I'm not getting the full picture. But now when I'm there all the time, he doesn't make a difference.

federica giuseppini 02:12

Yes. Hmm. So how does a normal day at the office looks like as a graduate?

Speaker 1 02:18

for a graduate, I think it differs from rotation to rotation. So this is my second rotation, which is which has no roles and no structure. So I'm a little bit I can say frustrated with that. Because on my first rotation, my rotation responsible was very structure, meaning that you know, I know that I can get hold of him in the morning or in afternoon and that he would give me texts on the email saying, oh, and I can look into these. So here is more information here is how you know the person can reach out if you have more questions or if you need any Come back to me. And we would have our weekly meetings to align to give me that and everything. And this rotation It's just endless discussion where I got some time that I don't even know what I have to do is not very clear, action orientated without any structure without organization, any organization or nothing tangible or nothing concrete because so the person that I'm working with right now it acts like a consultant. Hmm. So he's more giving advice, how you could do something, but I can also do with he's really bad in giving that in that way. So I mostly need to find that on my own or find my place or whatever. So I'm still trying to learn how to work with him because it's also opposite of my way of working

federica giuseppini 04:00

So how does that work? Does that mean that they're responsible of their rotation is like your boss for a few months?

Speaker 1 04:06

Yes. So we are getting a rotation responsible for time. So for six months, it should be four rotations. So program is for two years. And it's different kind of rotation responsible. So first time he was a line manager. So he was head of one part of organization, and the guy who is now responsible for me, he's executive advisor. So he's only the person who advise someone leader of leaders strategic leader, so it's also different people. Yeah, I don't know how to say it. And then he should be the one responsible for me. And he should be the one in also leading me guiding me mentoring. But the problem is, they're mostly extremely busy so they don't have time for you. Then, like there is a deal. That each graduate should get a buddy about this person if you cannot reach out if you have any questions you need help or wherever, but not all rotations provided to buddy. And if you have a buddy then it's much easier because you're like not alone in all of that but I don't have body so.. yeah, my buddy is my rotation responsible.

federica giuseppini 05:29

Alright, and can you tell me about a time that you were when you felt most appreciated and rewarded by one of your leaders?

Speaker 1 05:45

I think for me, so I was always responsible. I was never responsible for the whole process or for something, you know, very big, so I always was responsible for smaller. That's it. Then, you know, when somebody says, okay, you know, thank you, I, I couldn't do it without you or your input was valuable when somebody just appreciate what you did and reflect how you have done it. And if it was good, even if it's, it was bad. I feel that when I feel accomplished. So just you know that somebody is noticing, okay, you put some powers in this, you provided something and just say, you know, thank you Good job. And if you see that that person uses that to, you know, I don't know, present it somewhere else, or you know, just how to say praise you for something that you have done in a way.

federica giuseppini 06:39

Feeling appreciated?

Speaker 1 06:41

Yeah But yeah, in my case, it was always for smaller tests. So, you know, I can't point out maybe one thing,

federica giuseppini 06:51

it's okay. And can you remember any situation at work where your age played a role?

Speaker 1 06:57

Age.. hmmm. I wouldn't say age, but gender for sure. Which was super annoying, because I don't know, I felt that some particular men would act like them stupid and I hate it so much. But I'm not sure. It's may be hard to differentiate if it's, you know, because that was also a student. But I felt because I was a woman. But yeah, maybe it's not the clear line. wWhy it was it but that's how I felt. And I know that sometimes I would be, you know, one out of 50 people in the meeting and I was the only one woman and I was like, laughing Okay, this is also accomplishment. But, yeah, sometimes it was feel just weird, but I also hope that people it's not gonna be in my cup. But yeah, based on some comments in the email, So yeah, people think I am stupid.

federica giuseppini 08:05

interesting. And like talking a little bit more generally about leadership. Okay. So how would you define the role of a leader?

Speaker 1 08:15

Can you just repeat?

federica giuseppini 08:16

How would you find the role of a leader

Speaker 1 08:19

the role for me? Mmmh, I think for me, either the person who actually looks at my interest and who supports me in a way how to say so, I know that leader is a person who should look for organizational interest and vice versa. For me, true leaders are the one who supports me as a person more than actually employee. And I don't think a lot of leaders are doing that. So for me, it's about support. It's also about the guidance. So thinking guide you when you don't know you They're not sure which path is right for you, or work to understand your troubles and you know, try to help who have empathy for your problems. What else? Yeah, I think for me, it's mostly personal actually then business. Because for me, leaders were always, I don't know, maybe, I'm not sure how to say the words, but, you know, like, I like that my mom or my father, you know that they're looking after me, and that they feel that, you know, they will do whatever

is necessary to help me. So for me that those are true leaders who have that kind of relationship with me.

federica giuseppini 09:46

Nice. Kind of like if we talk about the ideal leader, okay, how would the collaboration look like between you and him or her?

09:57

First when it's needed so That is not pushy and you know that we don't have meeting because they are unnecessary or I think you know just a mutual conversation in between us maybe potentially, you know, leader checking up on me how I am and I'm you know reaching out if I need something I would say also more informal, yeah more formal than formal, you know, just feeling like that we are not friends, but you know, very close to each other that we can openly talk about whatever is necessary and not, you know, just talking to have some kind of conversation. So, for example, I have a mentor in in Nordea and I'm not reporting to her in any direct line, she's just my mentor and the way I have a relationship with her it would be perfect for me. to have relationship with my leader but it's not possible because mostly with my leader I can not be completely open and transparent how what is happening because they're also taking it personal or, you know, so they can also fix all your problems or maybe it's not their responsibility but sometimes just talking about it, it helps you know, so, for example, my current leader and I feel that he's a problem fixer, he always you know, when you reach out to him, he will think how he will help you how he will fix the problem, but sometimes, you know, you don't need that somebody fix your problem, you need someone just to listen and can give you advice, how to, you know, act or which further steps you could take or investigate or wherever. So, maybe that's something what is personal on my mind, mind at the moment about ego leader, to have more informal conversations and you know, that you don't feel judged by what you say or

federica giuseppini 12:03

so they importance of communication?

Speaker 1 12:05

Yeah, yes, exactly.

federica giuseppini 12:08

And like when we talk about Nord there, you know, there there's the four values: courage, ownership, passion, and collaboration.

Speaker 1 12:18

Yeah, I think

federica giuseppini 12:21

what did they mean to you?

Speaker 1 12:26

I don't I don't know. I feel it's good to have them in general, you know, to have, like, some kind of guidance, overall guidance. It's nice in words, but I don't feel in practice that many people leave those values. And I'm not even sure if it's necessary for them to be those values. But I assume, it's necessary to have some values. So how I feel about them? Yeah, I'm doing To live some of them but not because, you know, they're written but just because they feel they're right in some moment. So for me, it's natural that you know, you communicate and collaborate, and how to say it's my, you know, personal believing that we need to collaborate more be more transparent. So I assume there is much more nice words, which could be put together and you

know, put as values. So I think every person should leave you know what they feel that it's right. Of course, if it's written or not,

federica giuseppini 13:36

But then would you describe your work style? Like, would you associate your work style with one of those mainly like you said, collaboration, maybe?

Speaker 1 13:47

it's a collaboration yeah. maybe speaking up one of these first Speaking up which, I can't remember now. Courage. And there is also ownership. Yeah, I think for example for me It also changed I didn't have any ownership when I started because you know, you're scared. You are coming from Croatia. So you know, we were differently there. You don't have any power of speaking up or anything. There is no huge hierarchy you can't say no to your boss. So for me also ownership is I don't know, personally important, because that's what I developed since I moved. So I think collaboration and ownership are equally for me.

federica giuseppini 14:39

How would you describe leadership practices at Nordea?

Speaker 1 14:44

Ah, to be honest, I'm not very familiar with them in general. So I was never very interested in looking into. So I can only share like, common sense of what I see and how I feel. Um, I don't know if there are any practices?

federica giuseppini 15:07

I mean, it's more like how do you perceive the leaders? Like is there something you think they like they act in the same way like they're focusing on something more than something else or?

Speaker 1 15:19

Yes. I think there are some things they have to do. Like one to ones plds what what else is like it's so strange because we previous manager, she was following all those and my current one is now, you know, bearily in doing it, so it's complete opposite.

federica giuseppini 15:38

Okay. So you don't you don't see a path between the leaders?

Speaker 1 15:45

No, actually, I had three different leaders and they have three different ways of working. So my first leader, I think he never mentioned in one Oh, I don't know eight months plds or one to one. So I never had it. Then I had B. with your you know how that looked like. It was mandatory, you know, prioritize this. And we R. I think he bought half of the crew, but he didn't book another half and then yeah, he you know, he knows he has to do it but I don't know he, he doesn't prioritize it. It's not the most important thing he has to do. So I have totally three different experiences with three different leaders.

federica giuseppini 16:31

Okay, and I'm like, which one of those? Like, how would you change?

Speaker 1 16:38

to be honest at the moment it is ok, but I'm not sure if that's okay. Because we are all traumatized for or because that's the right thing to do. Yeah, I think he cares. And that's good. And he will always try to help.

federica giuseppini 16:53

So you're saying that maybe it's not about being too strict. So it's about more me and more
Like caring the still leaving you the space?

Speaker 1 17:03

Yes, I think so kind of, yes, I like it with him, for example, I'm not very good in reaching out something, just because I feel you know, if I reach out and if I open that, then he will fix problem. And sometimes, you know, you don't want to open that door. You know, you I feel like I will make a huge advance there. And, you know, he felt, for example, that I didn't have the much workload. And he called me after and say, you know, you know, how he's going blah, blah, blah, and then I start talking, and that's where I think I appreciate that, that very much, because, you know, we were in a team meeting and I said, maybe two sentences, you know, I'm like, you know, that my presentation responsibilities and all meetings related to Corona, so he's extremely busy. That's, you know, I'm having some challenges to beat the work load, but but that's all it I said and then he called me out there and that's what I appreciate, like, you know, the most out of all things that happened in those two years since I started working because, you know, he felt that I needed some support. And I think that was actually amazing

federica giuseppini 18:15

It's about social skills.

Speaker 1 18:17

Yes. And they, you know, they they can feel.

federica giuseppini 18:22

because sometimes, like you said, there are many employees that will not step up. Interesting. And can you choose three adjectives that leaders should have?

Speaker 1 18:37

So empathy, definitely one. I think I could use your list there are so many good ones. Communication also communicative.. I'm trying to think of anything else... maybe I can look into what you thought there.

federica giuseppini 19:13

Do whatever you feel.

Speaker 1 19:15

good so let me choose, I already taken the survey but check sorry if I if you don't see me. Trustworthy is a Good one. Yes. Or transparent may be better transparent because because yeah if you don't feel that, you know, they're honest with you then everything falls in the water either way. And they understand How you feel and you know, even if you're not reaching out if they're able to recognize that, that they, you know that they are there don't have problem to communicate that with you and reach out to you to clarify that and also to be trustful and transparent.

federica giuseppini 20:18

So it's really about the relationship you build with them.

Speaker 1 20:21

Yeah. Okay. I think for me at birth, everything is about relationships. To be honest. I'm always I don't know, I think it's personal.

federica giuseppini 20:30

But I mean leadership. It's a very subjective matter anyway, so that's..

Speaker 1 20:34
well, that's also true.

federica giuseppini 20:35
So can you choose three adjectives that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 20:43
self interest. I don't know how to put that in words,

federica giuseppini 20:46
like self centered?

Speaker 1 20:49
Yeah. Bad intentions. Like I don't know how to put it adjective. Let me see also how to just a second. I can't do anything without googling.

federica giuseppini 21:35
Google is there for a reason.

Speaker 1 21:37
Yeah, let me Google it. Yeah, that's self sentered.

federica giuseppini 22:00
So bad intention. Do you mean like negative intention? Do you mean, like doing something? meaning the worst is like manipulating kind of?

Speaker 1 22:12
No, I'm yeah, I'm trying to think, let me think, hmm. Meaning bad intentions, like bad intentions in a way. It's like not looking my interests but looking at the interest of organization in that way or looking at their self interest or, you know, putting the cells in front of the employee in that way. But yeah, maybe bad intentions, sir, is the wrong wording is, for example, with my previous leader. She was doing that all the time. You know, you were you're not happy, they're bad. opinion. That's the right place you should be and then she I hear that you're saying that's not where you want to be, because her opinion is opposite of what you are thinking. But she's the one right. But I don't know, you know?

federica giuseppini 23:11
So you're saying that so a leader shouldn't be, you know, focusing on there. Okay, so like not caring about the other people, like just carring the task hundred percent.

Speaker 1 23:25
Yes, yes. is it that unable to empathize, but we have a first one... self centric, it's the first one. because they all care, you know, just what they think. So I think that's also we can put in that category in and the second one is not able to hemapathy dies definitely and then I missing the third one but I want to include one I just don't want good something to put it there.

federica giuseppini 24:10
Let me see so not able to empathize we can say your sympathetic yeah?

Speaker 1 24:15
Yes. It's so hard.. let me see one more... Yeah, I'm not getting into those bulling, but maybe we can put that but I never experienced that. So it's super hard to...

federica giuseppini 24:56

That's okay. I mean, I think I have a clear idea of who...

Speaker 1 25:01

a terrible listener also.

federica giuseppini 25:04

Yeah, like open open to orders like caring? It was to say but like putting the employee before

Speaker 1 25:11

be be human.

federica giuseppini 25:19

No, no, no, that makes perfect sense. More humanistic view.

Speaker 1 25:24

Exactly. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 25:25

All right. And is it because so I'm guessing that you felt that there were some situations where you felt just bad, like you said in a row, but that doesn't mean that did that influence your performance as well?

Speaker 1 25:39

Um, probably because I was not motivated. And then when you're not motivated, then you know, you don't find the reason why you should perform good or bad because you just don't care. And if nobody else is caring, then you don't have a reason to wake up every day and go to work. I think that's still a little bit my problem. And it was the first rotation because people around me are so busy. And then you know, you're questioning me what you are doing is important or, you know, if somebody will actually say, you know, like, you accomplished days, this, you know, people are not having time also to not to praise you, but just to say you did something good or bad or to guide you. So, I think, you know, if the gap is definitely if the leader is good or bad, it influences how you work, and if you even want to work. I think it's super hard to find a good leader. Yeah. And it's more important actually, than a role you have. Because, yeah, you know, I don't know.. my previous leader It was like, you know, you felt like you need to preform but because of the rule sound Everything, but it's also not the solution that you're, you know, living in the fear, if you're going to perform or not. But for example, the others, like you want to perform to provide some value. And if you provide some value, then you would feel useful and if you feel useful that you would feel good, and but that's how it should be.

federica giuseppini 27:23

I think it's also different because like, as a student, and as a creator, you probably also want to learn you want to improve, you know, yeah, so it's also about that, and maybe it's not 100% about performance, because I mean, how would you be hundred percent perfect?

Speaker 1 27:40

This is also true, it's like, but it feels that nobody actually has time to learn or teach you something that's also a huge problem. Because Yeah, I think I'm always put in the water and you know, learn how to swim and sometimes it's also extremely frustrating and I think out of all people I was working with only one provided me the guidance and help and he was the only one really you know understanding that you can't just pick up and perform because you never done it before and you don't know how to do it but I think not many leaders or rotational responsible you know are actually are actually aware of that you know.

federica giuseppini 28:31

why do you think that one well?

Speaker 1 28:35
actually think?

federica giuseppini 28:36
what why do you think that one well with that co-worker?

Speaker 1 28:43
because he was in the same situation as I was before he was working with a student and he knew that you're not that all the time and you need some catching up after you are not been the office few days. So he was he have empathy but it's it's funny, but it is true that you really need some help, because nobody else will help you. I think because he was in the same situation mostly. Okay, he's also the kind of person he will always help So, yeah.

federica giuseppini 29:27
Okay and can you describe a situation when you have experienced good leadership?

Speaker 1 29:35
I can't say you know that I met someone in these two years who I would say, Wow, this is amazing. That's my completely honest

federica giuseppini 29:44
and what about in your life?

Speaker 1 29:47
In my life? There was only one person that I was admiring for me why but he was like my leader. And you know, I was never really But he closely, but yeah, he was extremely charismatic extremely knowledgeable. Extremely onpoint very very good in communicating very clear very structured very onpoint Um, but yeah, I can't say anything about his leadership skills that way.

federica giuseppini 30:26
But why why would you What would you describe him like this? Like, can you actually give me an example of a situation?

Speaker 1 30:34
Um, hi oh, no, he's he's also problem fixer. So we were on the same project, then the project was complete mess and then they were invited to fix things. And you know, from the moment they were onboarding until they were gone, you know, they had like, very clear meetings, extra points after meetings, you know, things were rolling out. They Things were going very fast things, you know, he said everything but he he said what some other people didn't want to hear or what some other people didn't want to say. So that's regarding communication. And he was also the one always delivering. Yeah, but he chose his own demons. You know, it felt that all of them are working very closely together knowing what is going on. And it was also a consultancy, so maybe it's also that consultancy style that you know, they're working in teams very you have like partner, Senior Consultant, Junior consultant, but as a team they were working at amazing you know, what we couldn't do in Nrodea days. So that's that's the only time when I was like, you know, really admiring how they are working.

federica giuseppini 31:53
So do you think it's because of the hierarchical structure Do you think because some I mean, in a consultant, then you have this pretty much four step now. So you're like an owner and then a senior and so forth.

Speaker 1 32:09

Not sure, but it's just like, you know, they came as a team and at the moment that was, you know, out there, how they were breaking beat, you know how they work in team by So, so I don't have a lot of knowledge how they were working between them. But it's a team. You know, everything that that guy presented delivered, everything was on point and yeah, things were done at the end. But that's regarding the project. But yeah, that's the only person I found it. I was really admiring, you know, how he's working and performing and how he acts. He communicates. So the way he works and I think, you know, like he wants to be that person, you know, wow. Like he was like that to us. You know, like when he was in the Meeting speaking. I was like Wow he killed it.

federica giuseppini 33:09

And can you describe a situation where you have experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 33:12

Ahahah I think yeah, I think the my previous manager was a very good example of that. Um, yeah, she was very stubborn. Very self centric. She was always the one who's always right. she's did not want to listen at all. Yeah, she would also get mad if you say something that she disagrees with.

federica giuseppini 33:48

But how can you tell me an example?

Speaker 1 33:51

Hmm? Oh, I remeber a good one.. so I don't know what was what actually happened. But so my fellow graduate was looking for advice. And she, he was talking with her, but you know, she didn't say anything relevant or anything that could be very helpful for him. So he looked for advice to somebody, he went to somebody else. And then when she heard that, he asked for advice, somebody else she got very mad. And she actually attacked him. In a way, you know, that maybe it's his own fault that he's in situation that he is, you know, because he was not having a lot of things to do, you know, maybe it's because he's not very proactive and not because, you know... Well, I think it's a team's problem. She should be the one that solves those problems, how he, you know, even think of reaching out to somebody else. So she was like, very mad. And I think, you know, she did a very bad picture, because you should have a right to speak whomever you want whatever you want, if you need some advice. That was like, super crazy. And also, I don't know, I think she was also very judgmental. I think that's also crucial. Because again, you feel that you can't be yourself. And you know, what's the point then? Like?

federica giuseppini 35:27

yeah.. but what was the advice about?

Speaker 1 35:36

he was not having a lot of things to do..

federica giuseppini 35:39

so he asked someone else to give him something?

Speaker 1 35:42

you know, to get another opinion. She got very mad. Yeah, because, you know, sometimes you I think we're all in the same situation or sometimes you're not sure if you're the one you know, having the problem or is there a real problems so I don't know for example I had a situation similar with my current leader but he act in another way. So I didn't have anything to do because my responses was extremely busy and you know, you don't know if I should just you know be very accept the ball and understandable that okay nice Corona happening he says most

important or important things already should be the one You know, also think about my development of saying, you know, I am the one without any work, you know, sometimes you don't know what to do.. So he you know, ask somebody else, you know, and she got very mad. very made. Yeah, I think it was, it was about the topic, but maybe you should not take me for granted.

federica giuseppini 36:48

But it was just it was just to know if it was you know, something about an actual job that she wanted to say on it, or like it's just like communicated with it was just Yes. And how So how does your leader assess your performance?

Speaker 1 37:02

How can you assess my performance? At the moment? I don't think something like that exists even though since I didn't have that much workload, he's also he also on board with me with the things that he is working with. So that's maybe where he can see how I work and reform even though he's still the one driving it. So and he doesn't have many deadlines or something so I don't think he can see much. So I think more rotational responsible can see how you perform if you deliver on time, but it's also based on tests test to get so I don't have official, you know, performance review. It will maybe go setting at the beginning of the year. Then the you know, just the reflect. But I don't think that's performance related.

federica giuseppini 38:07

Alrighth..

Speaker 1 38:12

nobody actually, nobody actually says how you're performing, but I just think about it.

federica giuseppini 38:19

No, because I thought it was the you know, when you have this PLD I guess then you have the leader should ask for feedback..

Speaker 1 38:27

Yeah, actually, that's true. But yeah, I think so. Maybe also those two, the only good feedback I ever got, it was also from the guy I worked with but just because he was the one working very close to me. We were working together and he was able to provide me that feedback based on his experience and with the time and take series, the feedback that I get, for example from my leader, because he sees things differently and they are more fluffy and They will say, you know, I am a good asset to a team. You know, she brings positive energy, blah, blah, but it's not related to how I perform, or what should I prove, you know, it's more general advice. So that's why I don't take it as very important title, because I don't feel that I'm getting any value on how I perform it that way. Because not so many of them will go very deep and write that review in a way that can actually help you.

federica giuseppini 39:34

So how would you change this to make it more effective?

Speaker 1 39:38

Maybe also, tasks specific, you know that it's more specific and maybe, oh, yeah. You asked about particular topic. How did you perform because if they will be general, then it's always you know, all the phrases you're not tracing but yeah, just like general. So they need to be more specific about that, you know?

federica giuseppini 40:04

So like a list of things, like, literally, I'm strict things like, okay, you did this in this presentation, you're could have changed colors or something

Speaker 1 40:13

Yes and they should be maybe, you know, maybe I should ask for feedback, you know, while immediately after I present, or, you know, maybe it's also action point on me to reach out after and say, you know what was because at the moment I don't know even what though, what are their expectations and you know how to meet those expectations because I don't have anything clear. So maybe it's also about setting expectation at the beginning, even though I'm really trying to do that, but Im notmanaged to establish

federica giuseppini 40:49

it's hard. It's not as easy..

Speaker 1 40:51

Yeah, no, like do you expect to mock up PowerPoint of two slides are you are expecting these deep dives. 50 pages?

federica giuseppini 41:01

because also like you don't know, people are so different, especially when you have rotations like you don't know who you're working with. So you need to figure that out.

Speaker 1 41:08

it super, super confusing.

federica giuseppini 41:12

Okay, and if you were a leader, right? How would you evaluate your employees?

Speaker 1 41:18

Oh my God, don't want to be a leader ever...

federica giuseppini 41:22

why?

Speaker 1 41:23

I don't know. I feel like at the moment, maybe, maybe in the moment super confused about what I'm doing and super lost in what I'm doing. So I think I can't help myself How would I be able to help somebody else? How would I perform them? Maybe give short feedback after what they deliver, you know, good job or you know, maybe just short note I think...

federica giuseppini 41:59

So like a daily thing?

Speaker 1 42:02

Yes exactly Yes. But more you know, in daily work or you know, not taking it so serious Okay, we have to feedback so you know, it's just like I don't know over the coffee or when I receive something you know, just you know if i am just answering to you if I you know, if I don't really need to provide huge feedback or you know, is depending also like how big review it should be if it's something that I will be used to maybe present somewhere then I need to you know, change it wherever corrected if it's the review of something you know, that something somebody has done and doesn't need any changes that I think also just writing all this is great. Thank you for sending

federica giuseppini 42:55

So remembering both kind of feedback.

Speaker 1 42:58

Yes. but more Feedback seemed Oh, yeah. In daily communication. I think that would also help me in general, you know?

federica giuseppini 43:07

Okay. Cool. And what would you motivate your employees?

Speaker 1 43:12

cake every day.

federica giuseppini 43:19

Could be anything. It could be a work, it could be off work, it could be like a way of approaching them. It could be tasks. could be anything

Speaker 1 43:28

So my team was working. In my last rotation, they were like a family. And you know, they don't need the leader to motivate them in a way to push them because they're all you know, trying just to bring value and work together and they act like a family. And I think for feeling appreciated, it was the best motivation I could get in that team, even if it's good or it's bad, if it's bad, you know, saying everything in the setup, you know, we are doing, I don't know, we have some challenges I feel we will do great forever. So just being there and communicate, you know, what is happening and having understanding that it's hard, saying that, you know, you will be there for them if it's needed to, they want to talk. So feeling also approachable. And if it's something good that we have done, then you know, communicating, you know, get the team performed very well, you know, thank you for your efforts. So, you know, just making sure that they're appreciated. Also, that if something is there are some challenges that we need to handle that we are in bed together and that they're not alone. And also you know, I think may be important a leader there it should be the one who should be accountable and stand up before stand out . Yeah. Before yeah for the team. Yeah. So even if the team performs bad that they know you know that there is a someone standing there for them.

federica giuseppini 45:21

Interesting. Okay and then some background info because unfortunately I will not interview at 7

Speaker 1 45:29

Okay, so background?

federica giuseppini 45:30

Yeah, no well how I have to ask you How old are you?

Speaker 1 45:34

You can Okay, I am 29

federica giuseppini 45:36

Okay. And What did you study?

Speaker 1 45:41

digital innovation and management at ITU.

federica giuseppini 45:44

Okay, and what's your position in the organization?

Speaker 1 45:49

So graduate in technology.

federica giuseppini 45:55

And the last question, is there something I should have asked about leadership that you want to tell me Like anything that you're like, oh, wow, why did you not ask me about this one talking about?

Speaker 1 46:12

Yeah, to be honest, I think top of my mind at the moment.

federica giuseppini 46:20

But it's okay. I mean, you helped me so much.

9.1.2 Interview with Solveiga

Thu, 5/7 1:11PM • 1:11:21

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, leader, feel, team, bad, motivated, interviews, promoted, leadership, interesting, employee, ahah, organization, values, young, inspired, person, good, nice, shift

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

Speaker 1 00:00

I'm not a formal leader so I'm I might not fit the categories. I might be the outlier. That will mess up your statistics a bit. Okay, I'm done.

federica giuseppini 00:13

Nice. Okay. How are you? Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:15

Okay, cool. I'm fine. I'm fine. I'm uh, I mean, this whole covid is a bit strange right now it is and I'm trying, I'm having a hard time getting my head around it because in my mind, I know that this is a really bad it's a really bad sickness and disease and it's horrible pandemic and all that stuff. And at the same time I look at all the statistics statistics we have for cancer and all of the diseases, and then it's not that bad. And with my heart, I also I had a friend who was in the hospital like hospitalized and it had a really rough period with this covid with and he's out now. So my mind says, Don't worry, my heart says we should worry. So. Yeah,

federica giuseppini 00:39

I know and also here in the Nordics. We don't really feel it because I'm from Italy. And like, I think I stress more when I talk to my mom there, you know..

Speaker 1 00:43

oh my god, when we're in Italy is she from?

federica giuseppini 00:45

Rome.

Speaker 1 00:45

oh, how are they hit there? It's the northern part is the worst right?

federica giuseppini 00:47

They are hit But it's okay. But there it's illegal to get out. So like she's been at home for maybe 45 days alone in an apartment. You know, it's hard.. So I understand that like being here, you don't really feel it like, you know, you should worry because you know that other people are in situations, but then you're like, oh, but it doesn't feel that bad, you know?

Speaker 1 00:57

No, it does not in that in Denmark. It does. And lucky for that. I think we're really lucky that I mean, like that we're not trapped inside. Yeah, I had somebody was drilling. But now, I don't know if you still bother you, but I don't hear it anymore.

federica giuseppini 01:04

There we go. I mean, who doesn't drill at 4pm. You know? Exactly, exactly.

Speaker 1 01:12

It would be the worst if it was four in the morning, right. No worries, though, but I actually think it's, it's okay. And I mean, I'm used to working very flexible places and hours before I've been with Nordeafor Well, since February last year. And before that, I was a consultant so I'm used to working in all kinds of strange places. So so I don't really mind that. I mean, I sit with my headset on every day all day anyway, so it's here or in the office. I mean, yeah, of course this having colleagues and I miss the change scenes and all that stuff getting out of the house, but that's fine. Yeah, so you, but you have a really interesting thesis going on. Right?

federica giuseppini 03:23

I find it interesting ahah

Speaker 1 03:27

Yeah, I can give you a short though. Very short background. Because I don't want to mess up our interview before. If you want to know. Yep, yes. You decide. You decide if you want us to go into the interview right away. You do that You decide. So don't, don't.

federica giuseppini 03:44

Yeah, I can tell you that. Just like I mentioned in the email. I just tried to figure it out if there are big discrepancies in that sense between what younger generations feel about leadership and what they want. Then what, you know, people need not necessarily elderly new people, but more experienced people, people that have been leader leaders before and you know what they think about it, and where's the mismatch? And why is everyone talking about this and this survey? Because I know, like leadership has always been considered as a personal subjective and a little bit more of a shot, you know, topic in the sense. So I wanna I'm taking this survey to try to see if there's some correlations going on. And then, you know, I go deeper in the interview.

Speaker 1 04:41

I think it's really, really interesting because i have i've seen so many different I mean, I've been in the working market for 30 years almost. So I have, I have had my portions of good bosses, and that bosses and I probably also been a good boss at that boss ahah.

federica giuseppini 04:58

So how many times have you been Have you been leading orders?

Speaker 1 05:01

doing that for quite many years actually started really young. I've been at Nordea before actually. So so at that, then I, that was the first time I experienced having having teams in other

countries. I started out my career in being as leadership, a leadership path. It was I was accelerated through United States when I was 23. started up a company there supporting an international conglomerate of building a unit in the United States. And I was heading the finance department. So I had a little team of finance people then I was 22. And I was really young and I must have been a horrible boss because I was working day and night. So I think I was a really horrible boss because I mean, you should. And I realized that now if you go there that you do put an example out for your colleagues and I mean, if you want to work day and night, and you have to be sure that your colleagues don't expect that they should do Same thing and you also have to manage expectations. So yeah, but then I was back in denmark and I was, but I've been leader on and off and I have had had local teams and global teams, distributed teams. I have managed a lot of it. I've been the direct leader, and I've been a project leader where you have you don't have the official leadership, you have the daily leadership, but you don't have the higher fire part of it. And now I have executive advisors, so I'm kind of like indirect leading people and and working through people with people less than leading them or me. I mean, for me, there's a big difference between being a leader and a manager. And I think people have sometimes a hard time distinguishing between that because I think the manager in my own perspective is more like the person who take the conversations about how are you progressing? Are you happy and this is your annual score and this is what you will And your bonus and that bonus. And this is why and all that stuff. And for me a leader is more the inspirational person who will develop people and inspire people and make sure that we all have a common sense and the common feeling of where we're going. So that's a huge difference. I probably started out as a management I'm hopefully progressing in to being a leader. I mean, that's what I'm conscious about, at least

federica giuseppini 07:21

makes sense. So when you started your first position as a leader, you were 23 years old.

Speaker 1 07:26

Yes.

federica giuseppini 07:28

So is there what was going on in your head before starting in the position? Were you afraid of something and were you looking forward something?

Speaker 1 07:38

No, no. I'm hardly ever afraid of things. And some people will probably say that's because they don't think things through enough ahah. But But to me, it's like you can also overthink things. And you can you can imagine all kinds of horrible scenarios. And that's what people tend to do if they if they start to plan product. things especially when it's people related to difficult to foresee what will happen. So, do you know what do you know the story the children's story of Pippi Longstocking?

federica giuseppini 08:12

Well, I know the the basic the concept of it,

Speaker 1 08:17

you know she has a saying that is that is a some years ago it was a very popular management according to Pippi Longstocking or lifestyle according to Pippi she has this thing that she says I never tried it before so I'm probably able to do it. Okay I like it a lot and I liked and I'm trying to encourage my the people around me also to have that attitude because even though you haven't traded and you can think of a lot of difficult things, then you might probably be able to do it anyway.

federica giuseppini 08:50

Most likely That's true. That's true. Fear always gets in the way somehow we're thinking yeah, it'd be easier just to do it and you know, to think about it

Speaker 1 08:59

Let's start with doing it. And when we can always change things, and then we can make it better. Right?

federica giuseppini 09:07

And when you when you were in that position Well, actually right now thinking back, what would you tell yourself before starting? Because you You said you might have been? Well, you have developed as a leader, let's say,

Speaker 1 09:22

Oh, yeah, I would have told myself but that just because I have a high energy level, and I get a lot of life quality out of my job, and I get really excited I get a lot of energy from doing my job. Not all people think like that. And I have been working with myself to figure out that some people just like going to work at eight in morning and leave at four and they're completely happy with doing that. And and that has been a learning experience for me realizing that not at all people are like this

federica giuseppini 09:57

no especially here..

Speaker 1 10:00

Yeah ahah

federica giuseppini 10:02

At four is like complete emptiness in the office.

Speaker 1 10:04

so strange so strange, but it's not really it's Nordea it's not that bad at all. Not at all I have been in other companies where and I actually had a client when I was a consultant and we were joking that they worked from 10 to two and then we could run around naked in the office in the morning before 10 and in the afternoon after two because they was nobody there was so strange and we were like this is why they need consultants because they're not really much there themselves but yeah, yeah that's how it is but that's also quite interesting experience and and I use those in my younger days being 23 i would i got upset because why are they leaving Why am I not doing all this? Why have they not staying we have we're almost done or whatever. I'm using it now and trying to use it for a couple of years to be inspired and say okay, you also need to be able to put things aside and and then also when I.. I had children I realized that sometimes it's good to put things aside and I wouldn't wait too late in the morning again but I would probably open up my computer at night and then start working on it again because I'm feeling inspired. But yeah

federica giuseppini 11:20

can you maybe tell me what specific time where you felt this I mean you felt most appreciated by one of your leaders being an employee

Speaker 1 11:28

Mmmh most appreciated that a that's a that's interesting, you're saying that because I'm real still fairly new in this job. And it's always interesting when you change position because you need to find out what is the culture and and how do you fit into this culture. And in some organization, there is this culture of being "I'm the winner. I'm the alpha male and I'm did it Great job and look at me and applaud me" and I have no I'm definitely not that type for me it's

it's what makes me happy and keeps me when I feel recognized and acknowledged is that when I've prepared something and we that it would get us some people say, Man this is just what I needed this will make my life by easier now we can work together and so so for me motivation lies when when we do something that people makes other people's life easier or better or that we are progressing towards the common goal that and I'm participating to that

federica giuseppini 12:42

makes sense, but what about so this is what a lot of people make you feel? Okay, perfect the wording like, sorry, feeling valued, in some sense.

Speaker 1 12:56

Yeah yeah.

federica giuseppini 12:56

Awesome. And since you've been a leader for Few years.

Speaker 1 13:01

Oh yeah ahah

federica giuseppini 13:04

Can you tell me of one specific time where you felt like you've done such a good job leading people? You know, you actually, at that moment you realize, Hey, I'm being a good leader.

Speaker 1 13:17

A Hmm. That's that's quite an interesting question because I never reflect on me being a good leader. But I reflect on us being a good team. And I also know that we would not be a good team if I wasn't leading it the right way. So I mean, but I never think oh, I did a good job. I always think yes, the team is working. Yes, we are progressing. And when I feel that way, and the situation where I feel that it's especially when people have come up to me really excited, have prepared stuff showing me stuff and it's spot on. It's just I mean, it makes me so happy makes me so happy to see the energy that people are doing. And they've made a great job. And this is something that is valuable. And if we can use it in a lot of different ways, and that that makes me happy, and that makes me probably you could say feel like a good leader. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 14:17

Cool. And when you were leading people, I'm guessing that you had people of several ages. Yeah. So from young to, was it always full time employees or have you had maybe students or graduates,

Speaker 1 14:31

all of it, so I've had all of it. Old young, full time, part time and on sick leave, coming back from sick leave. Getting married having kids, Yes I have seen it all

federica giuseppini 14:44

Wow you have seen so many lives goin forward. Like you as a leader, you see the whole development. So it's cool

Speaker 1 14:51

their whole life Yes.

federica giuseppini 14:54

All right. And for instance, before you were saying that you see the leader more as like, Someone that inspires people, which is not a manager, but it's more of a leader. But can you tell me like a like a definition of the role of a leader?

Speaker 1 15:13

Yes. Oh, wow. It will not be shocked because I haven't prepared that. But but the leader for me is first of all somebody who inspires and develop people in the team. But it's it is also a person that can that has enough confidence and strength to say this is what we do, this is what we not do, because that is ultimately the responsibility of a leader is to make sure that the team is doing the right things. And so it's both it's a it's both black and white thing, a white person that that is inspiring and make motivating and developing people and the black person. That says that this is what we do this is what we not do. This is the boundaries and this is the structure that I want. But I I, my experience is that the more of the white side you have of the two masks, the more white you have, the less you need the black one.

federica giuseppini 16:19

Okay. Why do you think is that?

Speaker 1 16:24

Because if you're if you articulated about this is the purpose, this is what we should do. This is the vision we have, this is what I see. And this is why we should do it, especially also the why. And then people I see the experience that people is intelligent enough and if they are motivated, they know exactly what to do and not to do.

federica giuseppini 16:45

Okay. And what if they're not motivated? How do you motivate them?

Speaker 1 16:50

If they're not motivated? I try to figure out why they're not motivated my experience is that if you aren't motivated, it's It's a it's it's very typical, either because they there's something going on at home, or they haven't understood the purpose of the task that they're filling out.

federica giuseppini 17:13

And so you just try maybe, is there a procedure you do to make them feel comfortable to talk to you? Or is there something you asked to make them open up? Or

Speaker 1 17:25

No, I talk a lot with my team And and I think people are quite comfortable around me. So I don't. I would I mean, I can tell you what I would never do. I would never invite people for a meeting or just send a calendar invite and say, We need to talk. I would never do that. I would never do that. And I'm very, very straightforward. So so if I had a problem, and I think that people are not motivated fuel, if you weren't motivated, I would I would Talk to them and say, Hey, what's going on? Why haven't you delivered? or Why do you feel, by the way sense that you're not chipping in or in a positive about this or motivated by this? And, and I mean, I have this this belief that people go to work to do the right thing. And I mean, we spent so many hours of our lives working so so I don't see why people should not want to do a good job.

federica giuseppini 18:26

And can you define these approach? Maybe your communication approach a little bit more? less formal, in some ways?

Speaker 1 18:35

less formal? I am not formal. No, I really I'm straightforward with people I think and and I mean, I keep an open dialogue and I check in with people frequently because then then.. I mean, then you have a sense of feeling you can feel how are they doing? What is going on? And if you check in bookkeeping frequently just for a few minutes or just writing Hey what's up, then people always also write back and when they feel comfortable and they write us I have a bad day or

and then we talk about that or people like all my dog just died. I'm just gonna talk about that. And all they say I am having the best day ever I'm at inspired I'm gonna roll and then I'm trying to say okay, but also please remember to go out and get some sun. So I don't know if that answered your question.

federica giuseppini 19:34

Yes yes. And which one would you say that it was your biggest challenge in leading people?

Speaker 1 19:42

I think the biggest challenge is a I think the biggest challenge is if, if, if you're working in a matrix organization and and the communication and the governance is not a communicated clearly. So so. So the people I mean, I like that we have a structure. And I like that we are have a governance about and we know exactly that this is your task and this is my task. And not all organizations have that. And then that means that sometimes people can they just take whatever task they feel like taking instead of seeing, okay, this is actually my responsibility. And if I'm not the direct leader, then it's difficult to see, but but it is your responsibility you have to do it with and they're like, nah I don't feel like it ahah. And that if you're not a direct leader in matrix organization that can be really hard to work with. So I mean, always seem to manage anyway.

federica giuseppini 20:57

But so how do you structure your team Do do you define the roles? Do you try to, to avoid the situations? For instance? With

Speaker 1 21:07

How? Yeah, yeah. Like now I'm working in a matrix organization and also when I was a consultant that's also very matrix based. So So what we did back then and what I'm also trying now, in Nodea it's difficult when it's not common procedure at Nordea but always to agree with people. This is what you do. This is what I do. And it's basically also part of how I try to work with people because I say, I see these as being your tasks. And please tell me what you to agree. Yes, no, people usually do agree. And then we also asked them, How can I help you be better how can I help develop you? Let me know what you are focused in? What are you interested in what you're not so much interesting, but it's just basically a SWOT analysis saying what have what is the strong side what the weak sides in order for me to help people Then is that that way, it's also very motivating for them. And I can also help them feel better because I mean, if you like the communication, if you have the task of communication, then I will simply say, Okay, what do you what do you have a service offerings? What do you expect to be able to support me within communications? And you will say, Well, I can do writing post writing through student debt and whatever, making films, whatever, and then I'll say, Okay, how can I help you? What do you want me to help you with? How should I support you? And how can I support you in the best way possible? And that basically fixes things. The problem is when people keep saying, Hey, I don't really feel like to communicate and actually do something else. But yeah, but you have to do it.

federica giuseppini 22:47

How many people did you manage? What's the maximum number you had?

Speaker 1 22:51

The maximum number I had. That must be as a consultant, a matrix organization. I think we were 27 people on a project once and we had sub teams, right so so I had sub teams that I was managing it.

federica giuseppini 23:10

For one project?

Speaker 1 23:12

there was a huge project and it lasted for four It was incredibly interesting. It lasted for two and a half years and we were on the development journey with the customer. So So we started being hired in to solve one problem and then another and then another. And so the team's was shifted also is super, super interesting.

federica giuseppini 23:33

So and it also sounds like your way of leading you try to get to know your people like each one of them. So for instance, when your projects so big, how do you manage to do that? Like, do you actually go one by one or do you? I don't know. Try to establish this environment around you where people should come to you because you I feel like you can possibly follow 27 people on paper and then you had 27

Speaker 1 23:56

no, you cannot follow 27 and Once one's a nice but but I don't really feel that they are efficient. So be honest. I mean when when you onboard on a project or use the first meeting will always be a one to one to get to know each other. But going going on, I don't hardly ever do one to one because, I mean, I get so tired looking into a calendar having one to one is so that will kill my energy. So I'm doing that but so so I'm, I'm preferring and connecting with people on a, on a task. So if we're doing if one of the teams they if we take the 27 and we had a task I would go to that team and get involved and check up on that and feel the energy and feel how people are working and and see how how can we how can we how can I help and what were they asking for me to help and feel it like that? And of course there was sub leaders under me so sorry, I wasn't managing All 27 Yes, yes, yes. And also having having back then it wasn't called stand ups. But we had we had we had meetings in the morning where we were like, Okay, what is the status? How are we doing? And, and I also took that as an opportunity to speak about the direction and inform people of what's going on and expected them to inform you back. What did they see? What did they hear?

federica giuseppini 25:26

And so what's the image that you want to give us a leader?

Speaker 1 25:31

Oh, I never thought about that one. I never thought about that And I don't not I am very team person type so for me, it's important that that the team get recognition or the person who have done the specific task gets recognition and I see myself More like I mean, it's like an orchestra, that the whole band is playing and I'm adopting, but but I mean, I wouldn't have called several bow when we get together applause but I know it's a team effort. So So. Yeah, I have I haven't thought about having a leadership pipe.

federica giuseppini 26:18

No, no, but it's good. So you get to reflect the water. You know, it's, it's, I think it's a, I know, it's always interesting to think because I feel like everyone not just being a leader, not just everyone. Sometimes think of the idea that they want to give to people, you know, and sometimes being a leader means that maybe, I don't know, I've heard many things like people, leaders feel like people should reflect on that reflect but like, relate to them in some ways, or aspire to like being them. So like they try to be the best of you know, for them. Obviously, they try to be the best for the employees, but just try to relay Or some people are like, No, you have to be super knowledgeable because you know, only like this your employees will respect you I heard them all so that's why I was wondering if I don't know you just want to give an idea to people but from what I understand when you talk it's just about Yeah, so being comfortable to talk and do well together and you know, communication.

Speaker 1 27:25

For me, the most important thing is actually to make people perform at their best. And I am very humble, I realized that I do not know everything. And I always try to recruit the best minds for my team and then I try to build on their knowledge. I definitely do not know everything and I don't want to know anything. I want to be on the in the helicopter the balcony and know see what's going on. And then I have all the experts in the team. Like I do not play the violin, but I know how it should sound so I can get the violin to play very well. And so So no, I, if you want to be, I probably want to be some kind of inspiring inspirational leader. And I want to, as you said, people to feel comfortable. And I also want people to feel that they can be at their best when they're with my team. That's probably it.

federica giuseppini 28:22

So fostering a very good environment that like, if there's something wrong, then we work together as long as we all we're all go up.

Speaker 1 28:29

Yes, exactly. I mean, it's, it's, it's a team solution. It is because I mean, if we play solo, it doesn't work. Unless it's orchestrated like that. Alyssa, the music is written like for solo performance, and I can, no problem, do a solo performance. That's what's required, but I'd much rather build the team and the people in my team.

federica giuseppini 28:51

Okay. So question. now talking about you as an employee. Can you tell me about specific time? So very specific example, where you have experienced good leadership?

Speaker 1 29:09

Yes. Yeah, I had a really, really good partner in a consulting company I worked with. He was, he was, to be honest, I think he had some kind of diagnosis. Maybe or some OCD something but but he was, he was really, I mean, if you had an agreement with him, you could make sure that this is what was agreed very well, he would not he would not deviate from that. And he was he was really, I mean, this is entry, you're doing this. I'm doing that. This is what we do. This is the outcome and we were working like that. It was so easy to work with this guy. Because I mean, you were just checking in with a frequency. We agree on this anyway. Yes or No, and that was it. he was very clear in his communication and he he was he was when we made an agreement This was you could stick to the agreement was was really good nothing was drifting in the background it was like this is what we agreed and we have this agreement until something changes then we change our agreement also was really really nice to work with that I'm trying to do that myself also so that so that I think it was really really such a nice and you a he gave room for for for me to to me The more we got to know each other the more room I got, the less detail for the contract. We made the agreement we made like yeah, I want something like this and you know what, you know what I want? Yes, I know, when I made it, that was that was amazing.

federica giuseppini 30:44

Okay, so even there was the push you to be the most productive or let's say well as possible, like, you know,

Speaker 1 30:52

Yeah productive and also develop as a productive Yes, but also so he also gave room for people to be For me to be creative, innovative, explore new things go new ways. And of course, that's a journey. We worked together for many years. So so it was the last year was of course even even more rare frame so you can say so, but that was really really nice and I really liked it.

federica giuseppini 31:20

How did you feel?

Speaker 1 31:25

empowered? I think it's the it's the right voice management business word empowered, I think and also appreciated it because the control is definitely not me. So so if you if you want to kill me, you should control me ahah. So bad was so nice. It was so comfortable. The Oh, it was so I mean, it's trust. It's about trust, right? You make an agreement, I can trust that agreement. And let's move on from that. Right. And that's really important.

federica giuseppini 31:54

And you said that you take this as an example sometimes we want to build your, your team that you want to use You know, skill sets A and so do you think you often feel like you often think relate your leadership styles to you know your own experience so hey, I really like this with this boss I'm gonna try so do you actually reflect on this on a daily basis on your leadership?

Speaker 1 32:20

Yes I not on a daily basis but of course I do that I am trying to reflect a lot and especially if I feel that I am a I can feel that I don't have I haven't I feel that I am have a behavior that is not pretty productive. Or I feel it Oh, this is not this is not good. Something is not good here. And then I'm really reflecting it's me quite a change what I do differently. So So yeah, I definitely do that. I mean, I guess we go me it's a it's a continuous learning path, right.

federica giuseppini 32:54

Yeah. And can you give me a very specific example where you have a Experience bad leadership.

Speaker 1 33:03

Bad leadership. Yes, bad leadership is when? When the boss Yeah, I think Yeah, bad leadership. Yeah, I see bad leadership if if you have a boss that does not take responsibility, because ultimately it is the responsibility of the leader to what the team is doing and what the people in the team are doing that is ultimately the responsibility of the leader. And if I have had, I have had an experience with a with a, we had a way to say that as a manager doing that. It's a manager profile. Trying to be a leader and trying to make the big picture and not being able to formulate what needs to be done and then when people do it, they they feel this to be different than your people may be or Especially if you yell at people in front yell at one employee in front of the whole team that is really really bad. That is really bad. But that that that is usually a manager behaving like like that not a leader.

federica giuseppini 34:13

Okay. But did you have like a very specific specific example?

Speaker 1 34:20

So you want to give a real example from the real world?

federica giuseppini 34:23

Yeah.

Speaker 1 34:26

Yeah, I'm not gonna read it's fine. I'm trying not to I'm trying to leave the bad experiences behind me and then of course

federica giuseppini 34:38

but in my opinion, they're very useful.

Speaker 1 34:41

Yeah, I know they are they are but I usually crunch them, reflect on them and decide what I will use them for and then move on. But, but I have had I as I've only been with Nordea for one year I will not use my experiences from Nordea but but go back as a consultant, we had this this, we had this partner who was was a new partner and he was really insecure. And he was that he wanted to be a big leader and men are very inspirational and he was a horrible because he was he was not, he was not clear in what he wanted. And he was agreeing one finger to customer and telling us about the team another thing and people are running around and wasting their time and use pseudo working and when we had the weekly check ins with him, he would yell at people. And then that was that was not good.

federica giuseppini 35:37

How did you feel?

Speaker 1 35:40

Oh, I get so upset. I gets I get angry. And then I get tired. And then I get the like a like a host would get me out of here. I don't want to spend five more minutes here.

federica giuseppini 35:53

Yeah. How did you think that made the team feel like what about the people around you that were under This leader?

Speaker 1 36:00

oh, exactly the same. We were all like this, we're all like this. And, and the funny thing is, or the interesting thing about people is and especially when you're a consultant and you're, you love being in your consultant company, but you hate the partner you're working with well not hate but You're not happy with the partner you work with, but you're happy with a client because it's also it's always interesting things you're doing with the clients, then then this, this team feel bonding comes up. And whenever the partner left the room, we're like, oh my god, that's so nice. He left the room. I wish you could go back to the office and we could just do this. So we were having fun. We were turning into something funny. And I know in the meeting that when, okay, this was your turn to get your this this week, okay, that's too bad next week, it's probably me. So we were kind of like putting the team spirit compensating through the team and in and enjoying ourselves instead of being squashed by the partner.

federica giuseppini 36:57

I mean, that's a very good approach. I think Many people are not able to do that, especially, maybe, from what I can understand people that just start their, you know, career, they're very fragile in some ways. And so I guess it makes sense that you guys could like we're actually able to do that and should be a skill that should be spread across. In one way or another you're gonna meet someone that it doesn't necessarily have to be a bad leader, but he's somebody that doesn't match you. And so it doesn't energize you, for instance. So it's a good skill to have.

Speaker 1 37:34

Yeah, it is. It's a it's a survival technique, right? Especially if you're a consultant. I mean, you know that I love my company. I love the project I've been with before and I'm probably gonna love the next one. This is six months I have to cope. Let's find a way to cope.

federica giuseppini 37:51

Yeah, that's good. So now I want to ask you two quick questions and then I want to explore somewhere somewhere else. Can you three attributes that a leader should always have?

Speaker 1 38:03

a yes, empathy is important. There's so many and only three. You're so need to be visionary. And you need to be to choose my words right here. It's okay. I'm just thinking because a lot of

them tied together, right? But if you're visionary, you can motivate your team. And you have if you're empty, you're able to feel how are they doing and then you can get the best out of them. But to some extent, if you really want to do well, you probably also have to be a bit political. Because if you can, you can have the best team and have the best deliverables. But if you cannot navigate outside your own organization, then you won't be able to develop your team and yourself. So you probably also, if you press me on just having three, it will be empathy, visionary and political. I don't know, like politics, but you need to have a flair for politics. You don't have to be political, but you need to have a flair for politics.

federica giuseppini 39:22

Okay, in the sense that you, you have your ideas clear, if you like you're like..?

Speaker 1 39:28

that you can navigate in the productization and understand what is motivating other people and who should we team up with? Who should be not teaming up with who is going in another direction that we are and and what is the what is the priorities of the top management? How do we support them? So it's like kind of like navigating the whole corporate circus.

federica giuseppini 39:52

And do you think are some of the attributes or values in some ways that you use in your leadership style like you say you try to implement it?

Speaker 1 40:04

Yeah. yeah.

federica giuseppini 40:05

Okay. Okay, so those are three, those are the three most important

Speaker 1 40:12

is you also have to be really, really good at it. You also have to be really good at formulating yourself because you need to articulate because you need to be really clear, especially when you communicate, you also have to be, also have to be to be present available, you have to be credible, because it doesn't matter. You mean if you're just a corporate robot, that people won't believe in you and they won't do, they won't work with you. So you also of course, has to be credible. That's also really important. I mean, three way to live. So credibility, visionary empathy. I would love to set that but if you want to accomplish something and you want to develop your team and can keep developing yourself Also, I mean, that's also really, really important for me, then you have need to be able to have this political flair.

federica giuseppini 41:07

No, that's good. That's you, that's that's you to me. You're the first person that say that.

Speaker 1 41:13

Really? Well, okay..

federica giuseppini 41:20

Yeah I will never forget you were one of like my interviewee that did something, you know, unique. No, no, I think all my interviews were like, had a lot of different insights, because the topic is so subjective. Yes, this is definitely interesting. I would have bought three attributes that our leader should never have?

Speaker 1 41:44

Ahhhh not have.... Oh, and other things the data should have is be professional. Okay. Because you need to distinguish between what is work and what is what is what's personal So if we turn it around the leader should unprofessional is that a word? I'm not sure. But But, but leaders should definitely be able to okay. Three attributes we should not have you should not you should not personalize this you should not take it personal and a lot of people take way too many things too personal. So, you should not be personal about things. And you should not, you should not you should not you should not do... bad things mmh I don't like that, but shouldn't be you should not. You should, you should. You should not be too You should not be too to what is the English word for that. Okay and you should not have favorites I mean you should not have favorites you need to you need to have a whole team because that creates a bad atmosphere. So yeah taking things personally and not having favorites and you should not be too ehmm shifting your mind to often me this is what I want. No, I want nothing. No, I want to know you know, I want another thing I can you can put the right English word on that, but you know what I mean? Right?

federica giuseppini 43:30

So having clear ideas. And I'm just Okay, so before maybe before talking to the team just to clear up your own head.

Speaker 1 43:38

So yeah, you want to have too much to be sure what you want and stick to it. And of course, you should be able to listen and and, and pivot a bit if something comes up. But being very stubborn, is a bad thing. But also being being too fluffy is also a bad thing. Right.

federica giuseppini 43:56

And you said before you said a leader should be professional She should separated the private life from the professional life. Why do you say that?

Speaker 1 44:06

I and I say, say that professional is a good way I do not mean that we should be leaders should be corporate robots, but the professional is the way that that you are to some extent a role model. And you are to some You are the one who should motivate the team. And if you have been if you were out with the guys on Friday getting really drunk and hammered and puking and behaving yourself really badly, then it's really hard for people to keep the respect. If you are a person who loses your temper, get upset and yell at people, then they also lose respect and if we don't expect and trust each other, it could also be a matter of trust. I mean, if I was gossiping, that was also bad and really unprofessional. Then you lose trust you lose, you lose respect and Then you won't be able to perform well. So professional in the way that you need to be mindful about. We need to work. This is a professional working relationship. But we can be good friends and I can enjoy working with you and I can really, really like you as person, but it is still professional. And when we stop working together, then we could go out and get drunk.

federica giuseppini 45:26

I guess that's something that really happens here in Denmark.

Speaker 1 45:32

Oh, yeah I guess.

federica giuseppini 45:34

Yeah. You don't usually have that in at least in my country, for instance, or other places I've been to I feel like here it's just easy to be informal. Let's just go out every weekend.

Speaker 1 45:47

yeah, it gets too much. If you asked me I'm willing to keep a distance.

federica giuseppini 45:52

Yeah, I don't know if it's about a distance. I feel like because everything here involves alcohol when it's a social activity. So I think Like it could just be social activities without alcohol.

Speaker 1 46:03

Exactly,

federica giuseppini 46:04

exactly. And then bonding. And that's very important. From my perspective. So I think, yeah, it can be good if you do it in a certain way, you know if it's there every Friday it's like a Christmas party.

Speaker 1 46:18

Yeah, yeah. Good. This means that you need to keep it at a level that is reasonable, right? I agree.

federica giuseppini 46:25

Yeah. Cool. And so you said that you led people that are young students graduates full time. Did you feel like there is any big difference between leading the two, like I say, maybe a little bit more experienced employee and just fresh, freshly graduated and students?

Speaker 1 46:47

Yes. Yes, definitely. All good and bad, I have you checked all the boxes? highly motivated, not motivated, really good, really bad. But if you if you want to generalize, I love working with people who are younger because there is a lot of energy usually. Now we're generalizing young people have a lot of energy and they're motivated, ambitious, and they're eager to learn and, and I love that because that also pushes me to, to to grow and and I love that. I have also worked with a lot of older people who and that's also really nice sometimes because they have the experience and there's a lot of I mean, they know what to do and you can you can take on your your memory or your experience and say something like that, you know, you've seen that. Yeah, like yeah, and they don't know exactly what to do. And sometimes if you look into the bad examples, I also see that young people can be a little too ambitious and I mean, take it easy. I mean, there was, I don't think it's that bad right now. But it was a point in time where people coming out of especially CBS was this joke about the CBS people coming out they, if they weren't the executive directors within three years, they were like failures, and they were all depressed. And that oh my god, that was horrible. It was a horrible. Yeah. But it is quite interesting because because within the, in the 15 years, I was a consultant. You You are in as a counselor, you also become a counselor for four different people in the organization. And so in all kinds of ages, and it was this shift in that period, they don't want us to be CEOs. And then we had this period of illness like, I don't feel like doing that. What is the purpose? What is the great purpose of this? Well, the purpose is the first earn money so that we can pay your salary. So So, so they I think I've seen all kinds of different people and I see people that are really hard to motivate because they just basically want to keep on studying and like maybe should keep on studying instead of working. That's perfectly fine if you want to do that, but but don't expect us to pay your salary. So, yeah.

federica giuseppini 49:27

Okay. Interesting. I actually heard quite a few times that our younger generations in that sense, I find more Yeah, they start to get 100 promotions by the fifth year that they work it which is quite interesting, because, like, the way we are school, or the way they taught us is just like structured like, you go far just like go far, far far, you know? Because I mean, it makes sense. Like our generation, I'm graduating, hopefully I'm guessing this year. And we all hold a master's degree and 10 years ago, I feel like it was much different. And it makes sense that people are more, you know that they want to reach higher positions faster because we also were told in

some ways and educated with the idea that if you keep on studying that you just your career will just grow faster, and then you could reach higher positions and stuff. So it make sense that's also very interesting, because there is a big such a difference between like the real working world and the educational system sometimes just fails in some ways to prepare you to use them.

Speaker 1 50:42

But there is a time like, there is a time lag from when the book was written that you've been educated in to how the world has progressed since that book was written. And also, I know that fortunately the CBS I know CBS Well, that's my my my my reference But but they also taking externals in, to educate other entities. And that's really good, because there is a time lag between this is the material that we're teaching and this is what is going on in the real world. And I actually see that I have also been out as an independent consultant working a lot with with, with the startups and, and I see I see a younger generation that wants something different. They realize that it's not what is motivating and what is developing. And what is challenging is not necessarily being a leader of x x or being promoted to this level in the organization. What is really interesting is the content of the work or the content of the job. And I think that is so such a relief, that the younger generation is really looking into this and saying, this might not sound like an amazing task, but I learned so much from this and I can use this for bringing me further and getting knowing more if exploring more expanding more. And and that is the right attitude in my opinion.

federica giuseppini 52:04

You don't feel like your older employees have this?

Speaker 1 52:09

Yes, I do. But it was 10 years ago that it was, like you say, but just be promoted really fast and be a big leader and have 1000 people, but no delete below you. And I think that's so old fashioned. because it doesn't really, it doesn't really tell much about you. Oh, yeah, you'll be a leader But I mean, tomorrow, you're not because the change. That's also one thing is changing. Is that nobody. I mean, if you look at the really tough positions, they are getting shifted so fast. So I mean, I'm not sure I would. I'm not sure where I would go for that because it's shifting so fast. And they're yesterday's news so fast. There is only a limited number of decisions. That higher up so I think they are losing credibility I mean, jumping too fast.

federica giuseppini 53:04

Yeah, but it's also a matter of people feel if people now feel more fulfilled of having like big titles because it is a thing. I wonder if company just keep on putting more layers of you know of leadership and management in that sense just to make people keep people happy, like just pretending in some under under ways to

Speaker 1 53:24

promote, but I think exactly that is the opposite is what is going on because companies delayering the organization and I see that everywhere also say I was been consultant doing that they're dealing so there is not room for people having all these men and middle managers. But what I see companies doing Yes, they are, they are really inventing fancy titles. So you could be a senior management expert knowledge for Star strategy something something completely pseudo title because it doesn't say Anything about what you're doing but people are like wow. So I think it's one of those fluctuations that people want to be appreciated and I think well if I can get the leadership position give me a title and okay you can get a title if you feel like that so makes you happy and I wish for the young people that they would rather look at the what they're doing instead of what the title is because you can also paint yourself in a corner if you're too focused on getting promoted and having nice titles. And you can actually get yourself in a bad situation weight will be difficult to shift direction or shift career or

federica giuseppini 54:44

that's also a big problem when you just graduate and then you don't know what job like the first job that you try to get. Yeah, that's true. Um, do you it since you said that you have yet both you know full time employees and students again and you will leading them? Is there anyone? I didn't know they strike your attention or how did you select because you were probably in the process of hiring them, you decided who to hire directly. So how did you make these decisions? Is there some way to strike your attention? And you still remember?

Speaker 1 55:18

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. And I also still have I still, I'm still connected to a lot of the the younger people that I hired from my time so in the SAS. Yeah. I, I always look at their CV, of course, when I hire them because I want them to be at the top of the class. I do not want the top top. I don't know. I do not want number one because I want somebody who also have a life besides that. And when I took the interviews, I was always looking for the chemistry of course, and I was looking for the human And I was looking for people doing something else than just study. Because I want I want to work with people, but full people 360 people, not just this corporate machine, right. So So yeah, and those who I have had, that I'm still talking to and it I mean, it's some when I'm when the chemistry is there and you connect on a personal basis and you have this a Yeah, if you feel if you feel connected in some way, then then it's that's the most important thing.

federica giuseppini 56:31

Do you feel that disconnection comes from sharing certain values?

Speaker 1 56:40

Yeah, values and side of life? Yeah, definitely. Definitely. And it's so difficult in an interview situation to say what are your values and they will say, Oh, right. That's right. They have read the internet page of the company and say all the right things. So it's really it's really a mess. I had a period I had some I had a few two bad hirings in a row and I'm like, this is horrible. How can I see through these young candidates that are really good at faking it in the in the interviews? So I started taking them to lunch in the interviews instead of just sitting in a meeting room. And it was so interesting, because it shows a lot about people how they actually behave in the canteen and how they eat and then that taps. Yeah, I use that as a parameter instead. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 57:27

So did you just select some of the ones that you want?

Speaker 1 57:30

Yes. And I also do select so some said that when I had lunch with them, and like, we actually we actually ended up with an expression when we when we, when we interviewed and hire people and we were discussing the candidates were like, would it be a cute person that I would go to lunch with every day? And it's like naah, Okay, then we won't hire them. Oh, yeah. So it's about the chemistry thing, right.

federica giuseppini 57:56

Okay, interesting. I it's five. I don't want to take too too much. much of your time. But if you can, I'm gonna ask you a couple more questions then I'm probably okay. Because we haven't talked about Nordea in, like, more specifically in that sense. How would you describe leadership practices within the bank?

Speaker 1 58:19

We have we're Have you been in Nordea, right, or are you still not there?

federica giuseppini 58:25

No.

Speaker 1 58:26

Okay. Okay. So you probably you're probably there when we had all this. And I've only been there for a year so So, but when I started, I was introduced to the whole carpet and the leadership values of courage and ally empowering people and all that stuff. And I, I really, really like that. And I think a lot of good efforts and ideas. I think it's the right thing. I really like it, and I can really relate to that. And it was so funny when I was interviewed when I was an interview, and they explained all these values to me and I went back and wrote it. I had a really strange hiring process but so I didn't have the time to prepare in the interest. So I went back after the interview, look at the Internet. And a lot of the things that were our values or Nordea value, those were the same voice that I had on my CV, so and then my LinkedIn page, I was like, okay, there's some match there. So that's really good. But coming back to the leadership practice, I think because we also do shift a lot in our management in top management that every time there's some new sub manager, focus is shifted direction is shifted values are tweaked a bit. And that makes it difficult for the people all the way down in the organization. And, and, and also being a being a bank. That is a merger of the all the different cultures in the Nordics here, we take up some of the I mean, let's just say that we're not that far going is not that straight as I would like it to be because you can make it agreement that that is twisted opinion. I am really structured. I like that. And I missed that sometimes.

federica giuseppini 60:08

Okay. So what would you change if you're good?

Speaker 1 60:12

I would change that. I mean, people are what is the English word for it, but they're not really good at taking contracts that much rather work around people saying, Yeah, you're doing a good job and then just keep on and then they will have somebody else doing what they really wants to do, or they've just bypassed the person that I don't really like that. I don't think that is a good way. Yeah, yeah. walk the talk. I mean, if you don't like it, let's let us discuss it. And if you do love it, let's continue. Right.

federica giuseppini 60:44

Yeah. And you talked about the energy of values, right. So do you think the way you lead people is related to them or at least strongly to one of them? You see,

Speaker 1 60:58

I think they have really, really related to that because as I told you, I can relate myself very much. For me, it's about taking courage. It's trying to develop yourself in the organization, being passionate because that's how you motivate yourself and but also driving things and executing things and yeah, definitely, definitely.

federica giuseppini 61:20

Alright, so now that we were getting don, two more things. So I do have a second survey that I would like to send you is going to take about two minutes again, this goes a little bit more deep into generations of what you feel about, you know, younger and older. Um, and then since this is a study of generations in that sense, is that okay, if I ask you how old you are?

Speaker 1 61:43

Yes, of course I am. 49

federica giuseppini 61:46

Okay. You do look like 35. I'm good. Oh, thank you. I have a good position as a sun.

Speaker 1 61:54
good lighting ahah

federica giuseppini 61:57
Nice your Danish right.

Speaker 1 61:59
Yes.

federica giuseppini 62:00
Perfect. And actually, what did you study?

Speaker 1 62:04
I actually one of the people who have changed direction A lot of times, so I started studying at CBS I, the financials, economic, and then I changed into IT. And I have taken MCs on strategy. And yeah, that's basically it. So I'm working with business development for many years. So, yes, I've changed position started out in finance, moving to consulting, moving into compliance and regulatory stuff. Yeah. Yes. changing directions. A lot of times,

federica giuseppini 62:47
And also, my last question is, do you like is there something that you think I should have asked you or you really want to share or most important, something that you're curious about leadership? In general, and, you know, generations and leadership or just leadership in general.

Speaker 1 63:07
Yeah, I think I might be curious about you not asking. If I see a difference between young leaders and experienced leaders. We talked about young people wanting to plead it wanting to move up fast and be promoted. A lot of times, too, I see a difference in how other young people I know we talked a lot about me being a young leader, but how do I as an experienced leader you'll see young leaders

federica giuseppini 63:35
Do you want to tell me?

Speaker 1 63:39
and I need to relax and listen.

federica giuseppini 63:44
I mean, I think it goes hand in hand with what you told me about, in that sense, younger generation, so maybe I'm guessing that they want to become leaders. Maybe they did become too fast and then they should perhaps, yeah, having a little bit more experience.

Speaker 1 64:00
Exactly, exactly. I think I mean, I'm all in for for promoting young talents. But also sometimes they need to learn to be not solo stars, it's a team effort. And if you are getting promoted too fast, too young, then you don't think it's all about you and it's not

federica giuseppini 64:18
true, I guess. Do you really think that's all there? Like most of the younger leaders?

Speaker 1 64:25
Yes, yes.

federica giuseppini 64:26

Because they're young. We're just not experienced or?

Speaker 1 64:31

they're young but yeah, I think I can bring in not think of one young leader that is a well, he's doing a good job. They are too insecure, and they are to think it's all about them. And they work too much and and they I know they do all the work themselves because they're like, Oh, this team is not sufficient. I'm gonna do all the work and then they crush on that. Although they do not meant to get the team on borderland. Then it's not a success. That's too bad. I think.

federica giuseppini 65:04

How would you change that?

Speaker 1 65:06

That's a good question. First of all, I wouldn't promote them leaders too fast. Yeah. Because I don't think that you're not doing people a favor promoting them too fast. They need and then I would probably I, probably we would, I've done that several times, coaching them, making sure that they have a coach in the background that can help them. If you are promoting young people, you should definitely help them.

federica giuseppini 65:30

So no, just let them go.

Speaker 1 65:32

No, no, no, no, no,

federica giuseppini 65:34

no, no. But I guess it also depends on what the general idea of leadership is in whatever organization because it really changes and I think I've noticed that

Speaker 1 65:46

I've seen them amazing young managers, amazing managers, oh my god, amazing managers. And if you have an organization that needs a manager, I vote for the young people to be managers. But if you want leaders, you need some Somebody who has some experience.

federica giuseppini 66:03

Okay, so they got some solo experience some lessons work life experience,

Speaker 1 66:08

work life experience experience for people if you say if I voted, I voted empathy is one of my my key. One of the things that we need to have and you get the more you have learned yourself and experience yourself I think the better you can exercise your empathy. And yeah yeah, that was just curious that you did that one also saying, okay, we do get promoted. And and, and if we do have all these extremely ambitious young people, what happened with they move up?

federica giuseppini 66:41

No, I mean, it does make sense. It's I think I'm trying to I think it's a little complex to chooseto get this this region from me this especially because I'm interviewing people, I don't know. So it's easier for people to talk about, you know, own experiences, I think It's really important that they use stories instead of just because from my experience, from those interviews, I had almost 19 and I think you're gonna be the last.

Speaker 1 67:13

Good. Thanks a lot of interviews. But I think I think it's really, really interesting. And I think I think you have something really interesting going on because I see there is such a difference, like we talked about when the book was written what you educated in and what the company required for the society requires. And also, there is this whole cyclic thing that when the company went when we have a hike, yeah, when we're in a lot of money and everything is good, it's different requirements. And then when the sense it goes bad, there's another request And, and if you're lagging behind in time, I mean, how should you prepare to go out in the reality in the real world? I mean, I see I can see that it's a big problem and a big problem or challenge for young people coming out and I see the companies having a big task and application to help you

federica giuseppini 68:22

yeah, I guess in some ways, no, but what was I saying before I remember is that people like the more I go higher, interviewing people like on a higher levels, the more they tend to generalize. So it is so difficult to get a to gather actually, what I don't know I feel like they're just used to speaking like you said yourself to be good. I, you know, talking and elaborate and articulate and I feel like it's just sometimes it's just hard to get the insights, and the more you go up. So it's like I was saying it's hard to structure the interviews Because I feel like at first you have to create, again, this environment where people feel like they want to talk to you, because it's a very subject subjective topic. So they need to feel comfortable. And sometimes when you don't know people that it's, you know, so it's easier to make them talk about, you know, on stories and on stories than generalize. And then, you know, I just try, I'm gonna try to put everything together and see,

Speaker 1 69:24

I think it's really, really interesting. And I'm really glad that somebody is looking into this because I think it's a it's really valid.

federica giuseppini 69:34

I hope so. It's, it's a long study, I mean, I was supposed to, and then in less than a month, but that's not going to happen because I got so many things. I thought I was gonna have maybe less than 10 interviews or like 30 minutes each just quick and then, you know, I started and then I got like, so many stories and I was just like God that's amazing and then people will talk to me for almost two hours and then thank you so much.

Speaker 1 70:00

So, it's okay. It's okay. Oh, it's only an hour so no worries Yeah, but

federica giuseppini 70:04

it's a lot you know, it's time for someone that has like a lot of responsibilities at work and it makes me so happy because I'm not only interested in the topic I just love that people want to give about it because everyone feels like it's a little off there in the air but it's not really concrete.

Speaker 1 70:24

but I think it's really interesting in it and he's also inspires me because when you also by the question you ask you also make me reflect then and then what do what? What kind of either Am I Oh,

federica giuseppini 70:36

ya try to really go deep into the personal reflection. Let's see, I hope so I mean, when I'm that I'm going to try to prepare like a resume for you guys to read and hope that helped. And yeah, I sent you the second survey. And again, I have to thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me.

Speaker 1 70:57

welcome you because thank you for thank you for making me think. on something completely different. I like that. Have a nice evening and thank you very much and all the best for your study. Thank you.

federica giuseppini 71:09

Bye bye bye

9.1.3 Interview with Fabiana

Wed, 4/1 4:51PM • 33:14

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

leader, employees, collaboration, feedback, people, leadership, feel, talking, communication, bit, team, experienced, company, understand, management, manager, general, perceived, layers, negative

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:07

Do you remember your first day of work? Can you tell me a little bit about it?

Speaker 1 00:46

So I remember coming in the office and being welcomed by another student assistant. That took me and the other tool just written to see somebody started the same day and started explaining us a little bit for practicalities delay, how to actually access the building and started showing us around and stuff like this. So like the first main things, and then remember, we got our floor, and we were introduced to our supervisor, our manager. And we had sort of like introductional. In meeting with her he was the three of us with her talking a little bit of both like how we felt about the first day of Thursday, it was exciting things like that and just introducing the schedule and B agenda for the following days, more or less. And then also, there was also like a meeting about the company itself. Say to understand a little bit like what's you know, like the values of a company or What's what what team specifically was doing, what the department we're in is doing, etc.

federica giuseppini 02:08

And then when you got the job, they call your right to say, hey you got the job and when you got the phone call, what were you looking forward?

Speaker 1 02:24

I was looking forward to see how it is and how it was to work in such a big company because I never had experience in big companies. My only experience before was a micro enterprise with like three or four people. So being somewhere that has like thousands of employees was something that excited me I wanted to see like the environment and how it is how like such a big company in general works somehow.

federica giuseppini 02:54

Nice and is there something you were fearing?

Speaker 1 02:59

I was Yeah, I was afraid that I was at but I didn't know how to... how to fit, let's say in such a big environment and there was I was afraid to feel lost in such a big environment and didn't know

where to who to talk to or how much I could ask or how much I could share about my fears. Things like this.

federica giuseppini 03:36

How does a normal day at the office look like for you?

Speaker 1 03:40

So I arrive around, let's say 8:30, maybe before the lockdown 8:30 or 9 inside the building. And I start immediately just checking my emails and seeing how the days looks like in terms of meeting to distribute when work Around the day, like depending on them, when I try to build myself sort of agenda for the day to basically just yeah to distribute the job and try to do everything I can in the day. Like in the mornings usually they're most of the meetings with a team to maybe make the point of the situation or just see what's, what's the week look like, or like the next steps of something look like. Then we have lunch usually all together like with the team that is in the office, the days during the days, and then in the afternoon is like continuing once you did in the morning, or also like having like other other parts of work that involves maybe interviews or like hearing from the let's say, collecting the content of a material for for sample articles, use leather, for fret boards and other stuff.

federica giuseppini 05:02

I have another question can you tell me about time that you felt when you felt most appreciated or rewarded by one of your leaders? it doesn't necessarily have to be a bank like in Nordea, it can also be any other place.

Speaker 1 05:17

I think that the time I felt most appreciated actually it's like from like my former previous life my former experience when it was actually taken like from my boss from my manager to a new client because he said but I could actually help him get the new client I was there was being there like for just one month but he said like, I know that you know the company and everything so I know you can actually help me getting through this client for this specific sort of deal but we're trying to make I felt like I was particularly important in my work and my position was actually Matt like, actually matter. In the company and for the job

federica giuseppini 06:03

So you felt valued?

Speaker 1 06:05

Oh, yes, absolutely.

federica giuseppini 06:28

Okay, cool. Can you remember any situation at work where your age played a role?

Speaker 1 06:39

Maybe not my age but more more my status as a student, let's say because I have been eating, let's say, contacted me several times because in the words of other people, I could bring let's say a fresh eyes to some situation where Maybe other people that are more used to the company or to a specific project already have their ideas set. So as a student or as maybe someone who is not totally in the, in the mood or getting the mindset because it doesn't work there every day and for a long time, maybe it could bring back another perspective.

federica giuseppini 07:20

And Okay, so, you have experienced it in positive way.

Speaker 1 07:24

Yeah. Yeah, I would say so. Not really, in the negative. I never really felt like the age mattered in a negative way.

federica giuseppini 07:35

Talking about leadership, how would you define the role of a leader? Any leader.

Speaker 1 07:44

Leader is someone who I'd say, take the lead, like that has the role of like guiding other people who seem like I can general like other people to a common goal, my mission would just say and has the role of like, supporting, like each member of a team. And like making sure that everyone's feel comfortable and like feel motivated to pursue the same thing.

federica giuseppini 08:15

And so if we talk about let's say an ideal leader figure, how would collaboration look like this person?

Speaker 1 08:25

Um, I think that maybe nowadays if differently from the past, the collaboration with with with a leader is more on a peer to peer level, kind of like I would personally understand the fact that a leader has more decision making more power into final decision than I have, like the other employees like member of a team have. However, as collaboration I would expect the same amount of collaboration, maybe even more like as strong and like that same story. Friendly collaboration from a leader.

federica giuseppini 09:04

Okay, nice. But how would it look like what would it be? I don't know... very simple honest communication direct communication or proactive or, you know how would the collaboration be?

Speaker 1 09:19

Yeah, I mean, I would I would always I expect like honest communication without however like the maybe the idea of a boss that we had from the past so like the boss that hardly says, not hardly but just says you do this or you do that, and I am the one just telling what to do. So I would expect my clients communication but also you know, like the maybe also like the, I would expect my leader to share. Also, it's his or her worry is he's concerned not only like just supporting and stuff of course support but I would like to have a communication and collaboration on my same level.

federica giuseppini 10:04

Okay, nice. And can you list Nordea's values for me?

Speaker 1 10:13

So we have ownership, collaboration, passion and courage.

federica giuseppini 10:28

What do these values mean to you?

Speaker 1 10:33

Like to me, I mean, like, related to work?

federica giuseppini 10:38

Anything that comes to your mind.

Speaker 1 10:42

I mean, I guess they mean, that's this is what the company expects everyone to. to work according to, let's say for the company itself, like how the company would like to the employees to live their job life, but not all them. I think that they are also values like you could easily, not easily but like that you could you know, agree on live according to like in your normal life.

federica giuseppini 11:19

What do you think about that? Like do you in your life your working life... Do they have an active part in your life?

11:28

I mean, yes, some of them would say. And we have like ongoing discussions about these, of course, in the company itself. Like, for example, I understand. I've been understanding like during my year and a half, like the value of collaboration and ownership. And you particular I mean, of course, I appreciate collaboration, but also ownership because especially in such a big company, it's important to take your own responsibility and to act for Like to start acting for yourself like initiating things. I always struggle to, to, to live a bit more the other two I think Yeah, okay, maybe I guess courage can be lived it somehow with a brave like no having the courage of speaking up and stuff. Passion I still struggle personally to applied that much.

federica giuseppini 12:36

thank you umh.. so talking again about leadership right? How would you describe leadership practices in general at Nordea?

Speaker 1 12:48

and so you mean like what the leader usually does or like how

federica giuseppini 12:57

From top management to your leader like How would you how do you see it? How would you describe it to an external person? What do they want to show? What do they want to achieve?

Speaker 1 13:09

Oh, okay. If, let's say that if we talk a bit textbook every everyone just aims to achieve like the only important things so like value for the costumers, and I guess whether like as the classic normal drive is what usually like drives management, also Nordea. How to describe I mean, I don't know if it's if it's relevant to this question, let's say but I would say it maybe and I noticed from other people, like other people saying this, but maybe the management in Nordea have a bit freq fermented, so too many levels too many layers and Very, sometimes very difficult to get there. They have a hard time communicating, like managers in general because either communication gets lost from the top, top management to a lower level management. So that's an issue.

federica giuseppini 14:23

Do you feel that in your daily work sometimes?

Speaker 1 14:28

Kind of Yes, I think so actually. Because sometimes like we like in our daily work, we have to communicate what's going on with like, also on a general level, but like more in that big department level. And sometimes like my team does not receive clear information of what has to be for example, communicated around. So it's a it's a clear like, it's a bit of a lack of, of just information and clear communication, that sometimes prevent doing some parts of the job.

federica giuseppini 15:09

And would you say if you could what would you change about the leadership at Nordea?

Speaker 1 15:19

Yeah, I mean, I'm no expert here also, because I don't know how many how many layers there are, actually and how if all of them maybe all of them are useful, I don't know. But like, let's say from like an ignorant point of view, I would probably cut some of the layers. So instead of having the manager of a manager of a manager, I could just maybe try to group together some of these like leaders figures somehow so that it's easier it's easier also for them to communicate, top down. Of course, all those also like bottom up because whatever comes maybe from the from employees is this does not have An easy way to reach the top management if there are so many layers to escalate.

federica giuseppini 16:15

Choose three adjectives that a leader should have.

Speaker 1 16:28

Okay so a leader should have motivation a leader should be empowering and it should be supportive.

federica giuseppini 16:53

So why did you pick those ?

Speaker 1 16:57

I think the two of them I got them from very Your survey and so I thought they were very important. I don't remember if you had supportive in your in your survey, but I had these already in my mind as well. And like I should, I mean I chose them because I think like I consider a leader that I have at the moment like a good leader. And if I think about like three characteristics that he has I can say that he has all of them so I just associate peace with good and with what they experienced.

federica giuseppini 17:40

Yes. Awesome. And choose three adjectives that our leaders should never have.

Speaker 1 18:04

I think a leader should not be arrogant and should not be distracted like meaning that he should try to be always there, also for every team in general and I guess the leader should not be bossy. Oh, yeah in a negative way,

federica giuseppini 18:40

the other way, boss to my negative way. So, exactly. might be using the term micromanaging in that sense?

Speaker 1 18:47

Yeah, yeah. Kind of I think it can be like, oh, "autorevole"

federica giuseppini 19:08

Okay. So, I feel like this, you know all the adjectives relate strongly to you know, having miscommunication. So what you talked about before, right? So, the space of like proper communication is that, or is there something that they mean to you in the sense that? I don't know, like, would you be like that as a leader like, would you be afraid of showing these three negative adjectives/behaviors?

Speaker 1 19:46

Yeah, I would be afraid if I were a leader of like being, for example, arrogant for sure. Like, just because I would, because even if I'm in a leadership position, I don't think I am... my skills aren't necessarily better than my employees, of course. So I have, I don't think I have any right to

impose my mindset not the mindset but like my, my thoughts and my opinions as the best and maybe also to not mock, you know, but like, impose them in a bad way a bit of a I am right and you're wrong way.

federica giuseppini 20:30

Okay, so can you describe a situation where you have experienced good leadership?

Speaker 1 20:37

I have experienced good leadership when I... let's say when I have been forgotten kind of in my team in the moment where I don't think there was too much going on. So like not a score on a virus thing, but I for some reason for that transformation reasons and stuff. I haven't been given anything, nothing more to, to do or to be challenged with and staff and I have been very clearly talking with my manager and he suggested me all the possible and best ways to address this kind of situation without necessarily having him to step in for me. So it gave me the tools I'd say to address the situation on my own. And that was good leadership for me.

federica giuseppini 21:35

Now, can you describe me as a person where you have experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 21:39

I have experienced that leadership like in moments where other leader and say, did not really for example, listen to, not to not even to my complaint, but he did not really listen to understand what I was doing. Like, why I was doing something. And I struggled to receive any kind of feedback, from example for this leader. And like, any time it was difficult to reach, or it was difficult to get a straight answer from this person. So it's, it was just like doing job, like a lot of work without really getting to any result.

federica giuseppini 22:23

So feedback for you is quite important?

Speaker 1 22:28

Yeah. Yeah. Exactly. Like the feedback was either inexistent or it was sometimes not that related to what I was actually delivering what I was doing. So it looks to me like I was not really being considered like my email or stuff were not really read carefully. So that's why Essos wise, I'm distracted in the past

federica giuseppini 22:55

question. Okay, we have few more questions and then we're actually them. So how does your leader assess your performance?

Speaker 1 23:08

Oh, I would say first of all feedback, usually usually like their personal feedback. And I'm shaking, that's the best way. It's always like, yeah, it's always like personal feedback, like direct feedback, but like, when some face praise when something works well, and it's work, like, you know, it's more like working together and collaboration when something does not work. Well. Mm hmm. And that's why they, yeah, they like so much.

federica giuseppini 23:37

What do you think your leader looks at when trying to assess your performance?

Speaker 1 23:44

I think he looks at both like the results but at the lever issue, something that he can understand because maybe sometimes when I'm doing something out of his scope otherwise is he assess my performance based on feedback of some of our people that either communicate like directly

with him to let him know or he contact contacts to, to understand to know, what I've been doing or how I've been performing.

federica giuseppini 24:15

And do you feel like it reflects the reality?

Speaker 1 24:19

I Think so, I have to say thing I think so. Like, I it's not always been like this, like with different leaders, I have perceived very different ways like, but at the moment it is, like I can see like, but when I received like negative, let's say negative feedback, it is because I understand that I haven't performed as they wanted or as I could. And I just understand that it's true. And when I when I received good feedback, I know that I've been doing good, but it's not always been like that. We have other leaders.

federica giuseppini 24:56

So the difference is really that let's say the leader that you have now. Currently, I'm like, trying to understand everything around you. So like talking to as many people as possible, right? So not Yeah. on looking at drug deliveries.

Speaker 1 25:09

Yeah, no, exactly.

federica giuseppini 25:14

Okay. All right. So would you would you change something about this process? would you advise something?

Speaker 1 25:28

I don't think so. Because I was thinking about the timing, but like this kind of feedback comes once a month. Maybe I think it's a good it's a good timing. Like, if we really, I mean, we could even do it like maybe twice a month, let's say because a lot of things change in a month. But that's the only thing but I mean, sometimes nothing happens to like in between, like in a whole month like not enough to be to communicate like to receive, like this kind of feedback or this kind of talk, like twice a month. So not far from this, I guess I will not change anything.

federica giuseppini 26:08

But like if you because you were talking about previous leaders, right? If you could talk to them, I mean, like hey I think you should change something because you are not perceiving what I'm perceiving. What would you tell them?

Speaker 1 26:25

I would tell them... not easy, that I feel they should step up their game of listening, probably not always only to what they want to listen to, but like in general to like different opinions and to the opinion of me or to the employee itself. But and also that they maybe should start with more of an open mind instead of just because my previous one of my previous leaders was clearly from beginning.. every kind of feedback session or other stuff she would have already an idea in like stuck in her mind and that was very clear and it was very difficult also to deviate, deviate from it and making her change her mind. So, let's say that like, yeah, maybe asking them to have more an open mind and more like having more space for opinions I could be an idea.

federica giuseppini 27:31

Okay because you know, I'm trying to find out maybe actually, you know, precise advices.

Speaker 1 27:40

Listen, listen more. So starts not maybe like not start... Don't think you are right from the beginning. change your mind if it's needed.

federica giuseppini 27:52

To change a behavior is really hard... So you have perceived these differences based on people, like on each individual?

Speaker 1 28:03

Yeah, I have to say it's not really a problem of processes.

federica giuseppini 28:10

Okay, so any if you were a leader How would you evaluate your employees?

Speaker 1 28:21

Oh my god. Well, you mean like on a performance basis like...?

federica giuseppini 28:33

Both performance and personal.

Speaker 1 28:39

I think what I would see like use like other people feedback because it's, it's it's been quite useful for my case I think I would try to use the same I would evaluate them also the same amount of have gone the exchange of the communication I have with my employees. So I, if I were a leader, I would like to communicate with them as much as possible. But I would like to see also the other way around. So the other people communicating to me what's the what are the concerns or problems or issues, but also the positive ideas, something that can change? So I would I would assess them with, like honesty in telling me what they think, like what can be done differently, what can be done better, and stuff. And then as a performance indicator. I don't know. I guess it depends a lot on the job that we're doing.

federica giuseppini 29:42

You made it clear the maybe the system right now it's something you would use you would happily use because it seems to work?

Speaker 1 29:48

I guess show Yeah. Yeah, it works like this.

federica giuseppini 29:52

Okay, and how would you motivate them?

Speaker 1 29:57

I would like to create a lot of team spirit. So making making sure to get together like either like physically or virtually, inside, outside, whatever when it's possible. And like making sure that the team has a tent like has its own has a lot of attention. But also we can put focus and attention on the single people so that they can be able to like praised or, you know, be recognized by the others and foster themselves and nurture themselves. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 30:35

Okay. Now we're talking a little bit with a broader angle to the leadership topic. So what do you think is the best attribute that young generations, like yours, bring to the leadership table?

Speaker 1 31:03

Maybe the fact of being more genuine. Somehow, like I can see that there is less stiffness, like in this, like and maybe in the young generation compared to the older ones. So sort of like a sort of sense perception of being equal of equality. I would say that's very nice.

federica giuseppini 31:31

And can I ask you how old are you?

Speaker 1 31:42

23

federica giuseppini 31:45

What are you studying?

Speaker 1 31:46

International marketing and management.

federica giuseppini 31:50

What's your position in the organization?

Speaker 1 31:55

Students assistant, group CIO.

federica giuseppini 32:02

And you are from Italy?

Speaker 1 32:05

Yes.

federica giuseppini 32:08

Do you think or is there something I should have asked? Or you want to tell me about generally the leadership topic?

Speaker 1 32:28

I mean, no, you just you went through like pros and cons and what, what they think it is what it should be.

9.1.4 Interview with Jane

Wed, 4/1 7:50AM • 38:43

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

leader, people, work, team, feedback, employees, company, manager, leadership, motivated, tasks, student, deliverable, feel, job, couple, terms, values, positive, spoke

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:00

Do you remember your first day at work?

Speaker 1 00:00

yeah. Okay. So just in general, what happened on my first day. So I came to Nordea and I went in the reception and what's meant by one of the students, also my team, and I started at the same

time as another colleague. And we were kind of brought up to the office and met a couple different people got our equipment. And we didn't, or the login details in work on our first day. So it took a little bit of time, you know, we ended up reading a lot interest articles because we couldn't really get into the work. But that seems that I have learned is quite common. And then, we had a couple of different meetings with different students on our team, to kind of hear a little bit about what our team like. Our teams is not the students but the people who would be working with. To hear about what they do on a daily basis, and what we might be helping with. That's kind of what I remember the first day.

federica giuseppini 00:41

That sounds great. And when you got the job right, do you remember when you got it? Is there something you were looking forward?

Speaker 1 01:15

Sorry, what I was looking for when I applied or?

federica giuseppini 01:18

when you when you knew you got the position, and you were about to start.

Speaker 1 01:22

So I was really looking forward to starting a job First of all, to have kind of, to have a job and then work because I just started my masters. And I was looking forward to meeting a team of students because I heard it was quite a big kind of dynamic place and to meet new people to develop my skills. And and of course, Nordea is known as like a good employer. That's what I heard about the office in Denmark. And yeah, I was just looking forward to meeting people and, and learning new stuff. Basically.

federica giuseppini 02:00

Nice and is there something you were fearing or afraid of?

Speaker 1 02:04

And I was maybe afraid of balancing work and school, as well as you know, you never know if you're going to get along with your team and your manager, and how difficult the tasks might be. So I guess that was Those were the kind of main things I was concerned about. And yeah, I think it's always you're always going to be nervous before starting a new job and being uncertain about what the people are like and what the tasks are like. Yeah, yeah.

federica giuseppini 02:36

Okay, and how does a normal day at the office look like?

Speaker 1 02:40

So on a normal day, I will come in just before 9am I'll set up my computer and, and then have a coffee with one of my colleagues. Then I'll check you know, emails. Now I'll call maybe my project manager and Go through. Yeah, tried to kind of go through a couple of my tasks, a couple of meetings and then have lunch with my team. And afternoon as well, the I go through a couple of tasks and then probably leave around 4:30 or so depending on how much I have to do. So the days you know more, they're not too hectic, but I usually have enough to do.

federica giuseppini 03:23

Okay, that sounds good. Can you tell me a time where you found most appreciated and rewarded by one of your leaders? And it doesn't have to be the bank.

Speaker 1 03:38

It doesn't have to beat Nordea okay. And at my previous job when I was working full time, we work with clients and basically on PR strategy. And for a brief period it was or actually for a couple of months. It was just me and the head of the team working on this question. And during that time, the client was actually awarded this best PR campaign and award and my, my boss decided to send me instead of our new manager who joined the team because he said, You know, this is your work even though there was a new manager who would only be the one to go. So that made me feel bad. Because I felt recognized from the head of the team.

federica giuseppini 04:27

Like, you know, you added value?

Speaker 1 04:31

Yeah. I felt that the value was like recognized. That's really nice.

federica giuseppini 04:36

Nice. And can you remember any situation at work where your age played a role, positive or negative?

Speaker 1 04:49

I think in terms of positive I think there have been maybe a couple of instances where Being maybe younger than the managers can bring a fresh perspective and being aware of certain things that I don't know what what digital things that maybe that some older managers may not be so comfortable with or familiar with. In a negative way, I guess I don't know if there's a specific case, but I guess in general, there can be certain, like stereotypes where you don't have maybe as much respect or, or not that much As expected of you because you're a bit younger and maybe like experience. But I don't know if I could tell you a specific time.

federica giuseppini 05:48

Talking a little bit more about leadership. How would you define the role of a leader?

Speaker 1 05:59

I Think a leader should be someone who motivates and guides employees and kind of keeps them on track towards a certain goal. And then understands maybe when the team needs to push or, or needs to push or doesn't need to push, you know, like so kind of a guiding, guiding hand. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 06:29

so if we were talking about like an ideal leader, how would the collaboration with you and your ideal leader look like?

Speaker 1 06:40

So my dear leader, I think it would, it would need to strike some sort of balance where they understand that as as a junior, I need support in certain areas and I need kind of both help and motivation, but also giving enough space that I can kind of grow and have my own ideas. And so being kind of like a guiding hand rather than just instructions, if that makes sense. So having that striking that kind of balance between helping and not over running, if that make sense.

federica giuseppini 07:18

All right, so now we go more specific into Nordea. Can you list Nordea's values?

Speaker 1 07:31

So I believe it's collaboration, courage. ownership and passion.

federica giuseppini 07:55

What did they mean to you?

Speaker 1 07:59

So ownership, to me means taking... I think it's very important that ownership is not just about what you do as an individual, but it's something you should do as a team and as a company. And so you should, to me, that's the one of the most important parts about ownership is kind of checking up checking up on yourself that you're able to do the tests you're given and checking up on your team, that you're, you know, whether or not your team needs support, to make sure that, you know, if I'm lacking somewhere or my team is lacking somewhere, then we're not taking ownership together. So it's about Yeah, checking up on both yourself and your team. And passion is to me about having motivation and being you know, it doesn't have to be that you're doing the thing you're most excited to do, but that there's some elements of the job that you actually are excited to do, whether that's the people you're working with, or the tasks you are doing that there's something in your daily life that excites you. And then what else was? courage? Yeah, so courage is very much related to speaking up for me. So, you know, and doing the right thing. So, you know, having the courage to do your job. And to, that doesn't just mean that you're good enough to do it, but that you have the courage to ask for help if you don't think you can do certain things. And and then the last one was collaboration. Yeah. And yeah, I think that one kind of ties them all together that, you know, you can take as much ownership as you want as an individual that if you don't collaborate with your team, it's not as efficient. And so collaboration is just important, both as like, you know, one on one and as teams and as a company and And it's Yeah, it's very, I think all those values kind of contribute or support each other.

federica giuseppini 10:07

And do you see them in your daily work?

Speaker 1 10:11

I do. I think I see certain aspects of the different values, some more than others. And it definitely varies Kind of day to day or project project. And but I do think throughout my time at Nordea, I have seen all those values in either in people or in Nordea. Kind of on and off.

federica giuseppini 10:40

Okay, but do you think there is one that strikes right away when you start like working with people you don't know? There's like one of these values that you can actually, you can see you can recognize right away?

Speaker 1 10:53

I do think probably Collaboration is one that are nice more than the others. Because I do feel that at least in my experience, each time I have reached out, it's never been hard for me to get, you know, input, some are more difficult than others. But I do think there is a culture of like wanting to help out. You might not always know where to get help from but I do think when you ask for it, I at least have had experience that I'm able to get it.

federica giuseppini 11:30

Very nice. And like still talking about Nordea. How would you describe the leadership practices in the bank?

Speaker 1 11:39

Um, I think it depends. There's quite a big gap between a my or at least my experience, the closest leaders you have and the kind of higher up management and because obviously you're, you're encouraged into interact quite often with your closest as manager, and so you do have kind of like one to ones and let that aspect. And then further out than that, I think it's very easy to lose track of the leaders in the organization because there are a lot. And because, you know,

the communication comes from a lot of different channels. And there's a lot of the same messages coming from different leaders. And although like, maybe that's positive from the message point of view, you kind of lose track of, of, okay, you know, and who are all these leaders and what do they all stand for, if that makes sense? So I think, yeah, I think the relationship with the closest leaders kind of is there because you have that. Yeah, you have that regular interaction and then further out from that it's a bit a bit more challenging than like,

federica giuseppini 12:59

Talking By your leader how would you describe the type of leadership the person has?

Speaker 1 13:06

I'm really happy with my current leader is really easy to interact with. And I think it's quite an informal, like relationship to, like in terms of the leader, Jr. relationship, which is positive, at least in my perspective, because it's easy to talk. And it's really, it's encouraging because, you know, you don't have this fear of what will my manager say? Well, what would my manager do? So I do think the informal aspect of it is very positive and I would also say my leader is very encouraging and motivating and so, yeah, I think also the fact that my leader has been in my position as a student is a positive thing. So you know, kind of that can be like an inspiring ask. We see progression as well, like where are people in my position have gone. I think key things that kind of informal relationship that it's not so it doesn't feel so higher hierarchical.

federica giuseppini 14:15

Nice and like talking, again, taking a broader view about leadership practice at Nordea, is there something you would change if you could?

Speaker 1 14:28

I think I think Nordea has kind of started to do it in terms of having more of a personality for the leaders like in some of the I think it's on the town halls, they've started having more and more like, different leaders speak instead of just one central figure. And as well as doing like kind of video stuff and having coffee corners and having more, making it less hierarchical and less formal. With the leaders, I do mean that's a personal thing. But I do think there's a very positive aspect of making it less formal between managers and more junior people.

federica giuseppini 15:13

If you could choose three adjectives that a leader should have. Which one are those?

Speaker 1 15:24

I think encouraging and just needed to be inspired for words. Actually, I'll say empowering and inspirational, accountable maybe it's like in terms of, of the team like because I think if a leader is accountable he'll push the team to be that as well. Taking the responsibility and also or yeah being driven but not just for him or her sake but also for the team to like kind of pushing the team.

federica giuseppini 16:31

Yeah. Okay. And then can you tell me three that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 16:36

Oh, yeah, so I don't know. I wanted to think of adjectives and a leader should not be can say bossy. As an adjective bossy, pushy and Selfish, I guess.

federica giuseppini 17:09

Okay. Why did you pick these three?

Speaker 1 17:14

I think pushy is never good because I think you can't you end up overlooking, like, basically the quality of the work that's done and the reasons you know, if someone is pushy because they're not getting a deliverable they might overlook why that's not happening in the first place. You know, it could be a factor somewhere down the line or, you know, an emotional factor that they're overlooking. And I think it really damages their communication. It's the same with boss it really damages the communication and the level of comfort that an employee might have with their boss. And, and in terms of selfishness, I think it's just really difficult to be on a team with someone who focuses on their own game and their own and their own kind of success only. I think, if you're not focused on what your employees are feeling and doing and achieving, then it's gonna be hard for them to feel comfortable to do those things. So it just kind of puts a cap on. Yeah, they kind of go back to that relationship and how comfortable you feel in a team.

federica giuseppini 18:25

Okay, and it's because you think that that, that fosters everyone to do a better job?

Speaker 1 18:31

Yeah, exactly.

federica giuseppini 18:32

So communication is key.

Speaker 1 18:34

Yeah, yeah, for sure. Communication is key.

federica giuseppini 18:37

All right. Can you describe a situation by where you have experienced good leadership?

Speaker 1 18:42

Good leadership. Um, yes. So I can take one example. Basically, because I'm a student, I'll be graduating this Summer and I spoke to my leader about getting about, you know, concerns about finding new jobs and this kind of thing. And my leader suggested that I transition to another project to kind of broaden my experience and I think that's a really good example. And he made it happen really really fast and he was really helpful in the transition he followed up and was providing me with updates and and spoke to people really quickly to make that happen. And I think that was a really good move from leader because it was kind of less focused on Okay, what does what does your company need from you Although you know, obviously did it was only possible because it was also beneficial for the company but and it was kind of looking at the people first and you know, also looking at Okay, if this person develops skills by changing team that can be positive, both for me and for others. You know, the team I joined and so I thought that was a good example. And like yeah going like an extra mile to make sure not just you know that I'm because because I'm on a student contract that is ending it was, you know, it was not just looking at like, okay, shall we done that this time it was like okay, well how can we make those last months extra useful? Both for me and for the company?

federica giuseppini 20:30

Great. Can you describe a situation where you experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 20:42

Yes, so in this company, I worked full time when I joined. We were a team of 11 or so and then after like three months, we were six left. And it happened quite often that I was pushed into like, you know, situations where you have to pick up a lot of responsibility which was fine, but I think the balls really dropped in terms of like onboarding and training. And I think I think me being kind of left to figure stuff out on my own, kind of, in the end, I mean, it managed, but you kind of risk letting down not just clients, but also me as an employee. And when you're already seeing a

lot of people leaving a company, I think you should be thinking about investing in your employees and their kind of happiness at work. And so I thought that was not a good, great leadership.

federica giuseppini 21:44
How did you feel in that position?

Speaker 1 21:48
It was very challenging because I also I didn't know if I was doing a good job or not until I asked for feedback quite a lot later, because I've been in that position. I was all I was already scared to ask for feedback, because I was afraid it would be bad news. And then when I asked Finally, you know, a couple months later, I was told I had been doing a really good job. And I think if my boss had taken the time to tell me that, you know, and that doesn't have to be a long conversation, but just you know, you're doing okay, don't worry, then I would have gained confidence quite early on in that role.

federica giuseppini 22:24
So feedback, also important together with communication.

Speaker 1 22:28
Yeah, exactly.

federica giuseppini 22:31
All right. So when we talk about your leader, how they assess your performance?

Speaker 1 22:45
And so, I know do we talk a lot about like how we feel and with these specific questions, And I think my leader is quite good at making that more of a general conversation. And I think he bases performance, you know, partly on asking feedback from those I work with. So there you obviously get quite direct feedback, like is this person doing okay or not? And then also asking me how I feel and if I feel like I'm in an okay track and if I'm learning and, and all that, so, yeah, so one side is getting feedback from people I work with and other side is getting feedback from me. And then also setting goals and, and finding ways to like, Okay, how can we measure that you're actually achieving those goals? And I think the positive side is that they're not just like, you know, goals for the company. It's also goals for my personal growth. And so yeah, I think a couple couple different signs.

federica giuseppini 23:54
And do you think he reflects reality?

Speaker 1 24:01
I think so. I just to some extent, I think some of the questions that are kind of required, don't necessarily, if it was limited to that I don't think it would necessarily totally reflect would totally reflect reality because because some of the feedback questions that were required to ask, you know, our colleagues, and they asked colleagues directly, what can I improve? And I don't think that's the best way to get honest feedback, because people are always going to be a bit worried about, you know, seeing that stuff. And so that's maybe one side where it doesn't but I do think based on the honest discussions I have with my leader that's when you know, we can more reflect what's really going on. That makes sense.

federica giuseppini 24:52
Yeah, definitely also from your point of view, but I think you have to, you know, assess performance you also have to ask maybe other people yourself and to see the results. So it's Yeah, I think it's it's a mix, right?

Speaker 1 25:09

Yeah. And I don't think it's it's a challenge to measure performance. You know, when you're not working with something very deliverable based in the same way. It's not so tangible. Do you think that's a challenge.

federica giuseppini 25:24

Okay. I mean, you're almost there, but like, what would you change about it?

Speaker 1 25:31

And yeah, so I think some of the questions. Yeah, as I mentioned, don't really make sense when you don't have specific deliverables or not as tangible deliverables, which is a challenge. So maybe leaving certain things to be a bit more like open ended and trying to figure out some sort of system that works better for non tangible deliverables.

federica giuseppini 26:12

Okay. If you were a leader how would you evaluate your employees?

Speaker 1 26:23

In terms of like, their, their performance, like specifically or?

federica giuseppini 26:29

I think it doesn't have to be performance and also just evaluate how they're doing, what kind of people they are Yeah. What do you look what would you look at?

Speaker 1 26:40

So, I would want to validate them. I mean, one side is based on what they deliver, you know, test on a test by test basis but also how they delivered to a team like how they, how they contribute to the overall kind of atmosphere and and performance and feeling of the team. So, you know, if an employee was, you know, delivering well the technical aspect of their job, but was, for whatever reason, making someone on the team feel uncomfortable. I think it's hard to say that that person is like a well performing employee just because they're delivering something tangible. And so I do think there's kind of like a dual side to make sure that they're contributing both positively to the company and to the team atmosphere.

federica giuseppini 27:37

Do you think this could have something to do with the values at work? Values that you set up as a leader yourself because it doesn't necessarily have to be the company ones.

Speaker 1 27:48

Yeah, I think I think talking about the values can help you stay on track with how the other company kind of should should feel If that makes sense, like, I because that's something we don't, as far as I can think, talk that much about and in like the, in the, what's called in their valuations is like, Okay, how, how am I contributing to those values? I think we talked about it as a team, but not so much as individuals. So that's, that's definitely something to look at.

federica giuseppini 28:26

I know that at Nordea you can evaluate your leader as well. There is a survey, have you ever made it?

Speaker 1 28:35

Yeah, I've done the people pulse. I usually tried to do it actually, every time. But I do think that's another area where it's like, some of the questions are super useful, but some are just not that applicable to everything. And some it's difficult to answer for your leader and not for Nordea or

vice versa. But I do think it's actually kind of a good system to to get get some feedback, but I think some can be a little bit misleading at times as well.

federica giuseppini 29:04

Okay, because like, maybe you would want to give direct feedback instead of just free feedback and stuff.

Speaker 1 29:11

Yeah. Yeah. Or at least have it like, more separate in terms of what you're how you're, you know, talking about Nordea. Yeah, or your office compared to how you talk about your leaders.

federica giuseppini 29:23

but I think there is one for leadership only.

Speaker 1 29:28

Yeah, no, I think I've never heard of them.

federica giuseppini 30:03

Alright, so how would you motivate your employees if you were a leader?

Speaker 1 30:08

Oh, good question. And I would, I would ensure that their goals are based on like work stuff, but also personal development, to make sure everyone feels that they can grow both professionally and personally at work. And I would try to understand what motivates my employees because obviously, people can be motivated by completely different things. Some people can, you know, be super motivated by just the professional aspects and people are more concerned about personal development. So, try to have a conversation with each employee and understand where they want to go and what they, you know, feel motivated by when they come into the office. So try to have it tailored to each person experience rather than just a team will be motivated by this.

federica giuseppini 31:01

And do you think because, you know, when we spoke about leadership, it's a lot about understanding orders and driving the team mainly. What about the rest of it? Like, do you think as a leader, it would be better to have because you also will have your own tasks, maybe some specific job that you're doing, and you're also a leader. How would you divide your time?

Speaker 1 31:27

Um, good question. So I think it's really important to make sure your team doesn't fall like that feel like they're like under prioritized. And, but yeah, also make sure you can deliver, maybe that's a good way to motivate those who are trying to become leaders to kind of involve your team in certain tasks, if you can Then, yeah, also discuss with your leader have too much going on. And But yeah, I would I mean, probably try to just do a bit of both and not not feel like oh, this is the day I'm prioritizing my team and this is the day I'm doing my work but to try to strike some sort of balance,

federica giuseppini 32:19

so you would say 50:50?

Speaker 1 32:21

Yeah.

federica giuseppini 32:21

Okay. Lovely. And you know, many times people experience especially maybe younger people, experience not boredom, but like the need of change of environment often so they change jobs, they change company. So if you think of yourself in like, I don't know, 10 or 20 years time, which is quite a bit. What would make you stay in Nordea?

Speaker 1 32:52

um, I think if I were to stay long term, it would be if I had the possibility to kind of as I said, to be able to change within the company, like, it would need to be facilitated that I could change teams maybe even change location. And to feel like I have that flexibility, like I'm not boxed in. And if I see, you know, I think it's also more and more important for people to see companies acting responsibly. So I do think that's just gonna become like a bigger and bigger element of why people choose to stay or leave companies. But yeah, I would definitely want to feel some sort of flexibility in terms of changing between teams or departments. And, yeah, understanding what's possible in a company. I think there's not that many companies that tailor to that right now, at least as far as I know. And I think within Nordea, like, I don't know people in most departments, I don't know how difficult it is to change between So that's probably something that could be communicated about, but motivate people.

federica giuseppini 34:06

Yeah. But as a student, you kind of do that right? So you have different projects with different teams.

Speaker 1 34:12

Yeah, I mean, me specifically, I haven't changed so much like, because within communications, it's more specific to one team. But I guess it is a positive side of being a student that you can actually talk to different teams, but I still I can't say I have such a good understanding of different departments within Nordea still. That would be a good, good thing to know more about.

federica giuseppini 34:42

Okay, we're coming towards the end. So, if we talk both about leadership and your own generation. What do you think that the best attribute that like, what do you think it could be? Best attribute that young generations bring into the leadership table.

Speaker 1 35:08

I think young people bring kind of an a more of an informal element to to leadership, I think people want to come into work and, and feel that they can, you know, be comfortable and, and speak to colleagues and have relationships at work, not just, you know, feeling like they're a junior and they have to watch out for their manager. And I also think young people bring a certain focus on like, responsibility like to take responsibility as a company for issues that maybe were not so looked after by companies before like climate and that kind of thing. And and I think young people are especially ambitious in terms of, of making sure you can like the office is more than just going in to do your job, that it becomes a place where you can learn and make friends and do kind of extracurricular activities also in the office. So I think that's something young people bring. And that's, I think you see that more and more companies that that's becoming kind of something you have to acknowledge and you have to try to make the office a nice space.

federica giuseppini 36:32

Do you think it's gonna be hard in bank?

Speaker 1 36:36

a yes, I do think it's harder than a bank because, you know, it's, it has, maybe I don't know if that's a stereotype, but I do think it's a case that banks has more serious atmosphere. And I

guess maybe a part of that is that it's also kind of an industry where experience is so important. It's maybe banks in general, like, you'll have maybe more traditional people who grew up with banking have worked in banking their whole life, but maybe less of like, Oh, I worked here and then I joined a bank and then I joined this. And so yeah, I think it might be more challenging for a bank to kind of break out of that stereotype of being very traditional.

federica giuseppini 37:26

Okay, interesting. And now I have to ask you, how old are you?

Speaker 1 37:32

I'm 24. Let's think for a second.

federica giuseppini 37:36

What are you studying?

Speaker 1 37:38

I'm studying ebusiness.

federica giuseppini 37:40

What is your position in the organization?

Speaker 1 37:44

I'm a student assistant or technology student, I guess is called now.

federica giuseppini 37:52

Last question before I sent you the link to the to the second server which takes literally three minutes. Yeah, it's Is there anything I should have asked? Or you want to tell me about leadership or?

Speaker 1 38:11

I don't know. It's I think it's a topic that's like hard to hard to generalize on because it's so it's such a personal thing. But so I do think like a good leader is able to work with all kinds of people and understands that, you know, there's not one thing that works for every every person. I think that's so important for leaders. Yeah.

9.15 Interview with Karoline

Wed, 4/1 7:50AM • 47:38

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, leader, graduates, leadership, employees, manager, feedback, person, leading, experience, sense, ownership, problem, important, bit, hard, extremely, precise, high level, organization

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:00

Don't work to do.

Speaker 1 00:02

Yeah, but it's fine. It's fine. The reason why I thought it was a was important to have the video on was x offer you, because when you interview something, somebody and you only hear their voice, and if you don't know them, it is sometimes hard to derive. Okay, well, how is this?

federica giuseppini 00:24

Yeah, it's a different perception as well, when you answer the question. Yes,

Speaker 1 00:27

it's very true. exactly that.

federica giuseppini 00:31

All right. So it's your first experience as a leader that you're having with the graduates.

Speaker 1 00:38

Is this sorry, what did you say?

federica giuseppini 00:40

Is your first experience as a leader?

Speaker 1 00:43

No, no, I have like 20 years of experience. So I have been a project manager and Program Manager. I've also been a line manager for probably process designers and implementation consultants and for practice, mentors.

federica giuseppini 01:01

Oh wow, but was a full time employees that as well?

Speaker 1 01:09

where I was a more traditional team leader you could say.

federica giuseppini 01:12

Yeah, perfect. Okay. And do you remember your first day as a leader? So like your first position as a leader?

Speaker 1 01:20

Yes.

federica giuseppini 01:21

What, were you fearing or what were you looking forward?

Speaker 1 01:31

I was fearing not to have the overview into to something not to be on top of things and to kind of miss out on new on some important stuff. But I was looking forward to having an influence and that was actually my motivation to go into leadership at all. That was to have an influence.

federica giuseppini 02:04

Okay. And then you're I mean, it's probably your leadership since you've been leading full time employees more traditional ways then graduates, I'm sure it's been quite different. Can you tell me some differences then you can notice that you notice between like leading graduates and full time experienced employees.

Speaker 1 02:25

Yeah. And I have also been leading full time experienced employees, in the same way some leading graduates because when I was a manager for project managers, they were also managing their own project. So I think the big difference is to have a a, yeah, a feeling might sound true sound but still a feeling of where people are and feeling of the situation and

understanding of the situation. They are in Despite the fact that you will not a with them, everyday.

federica giuseppini 03:07

Okay, and what about their behavior?

Speaker 1 03:09

Ahm that is the other part of it you could say, to have an understanding of, of how they behave when, let's say that they have a property No, in my mind that you can you can, in that sense divide people into kind of two groups. There are people that you need to talk to every day in order to have an idea of how they are and people who you don't need to contact or worry about. If you don't hear anything. A engineer should know that when you then hear something you are to act even though they might say things are fine. Does that make sense?

federica giuseppini 04:00

It does.. as a leader from a leader perspective, but do you think like, graduates might be more, I don't know, resilient or thoughtful over your way of leading, like, actually noticing difference, like in the sense, okay, when you try to, I don't know, bring some change in the organization and in the team. Did you feel any differences between the two, the graduates and the "full-time" employees?

Speaker 1 04:26

Yeah, that sounds to graduates I Isha because they are kind of open for changes. A they are open for whatever ideas I come up with. But in terms of leading them, they are more difficult, because you need to be even more aware of both what they're saying and especially what they're not saying.

federica giuseppini 04:56

So it's interesting because many companies put the first leadership was Seemed like, you know, students and graduates, instead of, you know, between experience employees. It's really interesting that you're saying that it's, let's say, a little bit more challenging with the with the graduates.

Speaker 1 05:13

But I think that depends to a large extent on what you want with the graduates. I mean, yeah, I'm not saying that an inexperienced leader cannot be a leader for graduates because they can, however, if you really want to get the most out of them, I think it calls for more experience. But I also have to say that when I got the job in the first place, I thought that I was too old. Because I think, and I still think that not that I'm too old, but I think that graduates when they come into an organization, they should have some role models. They should have something that they can somebody that they can mirror themselves in And I knew that they couldn't mirror themselves in me, because that the gap is is too big.

federica giuseppini 06:07

you think so?

Speaker 1 06:09

Yeah. Why?

federica giuseppini 06:14

because usually mentors, like, you know, is, at least if I if I think of myself at work, then I just want to be mentored by someone. And I mean age to me doesn't really matter the more experience sometimes the better.

Speaker 1 06:28

Yeah, but I'm just I think you're right in that, of course. But I also think that... if I look at my background, and I look at a journey over something like 25, almost 30 years. It's hard to relate to that for a young person who comes into the organization, but you're perfectly right, because I that was also one I discovered on the way that I didn't need to be the role model. Or I needed Of course to I need to be a role model in general, but, but I didn't need to be the person that the graduates could mirror themselves in because I could find other people who they can learn themselves in. And in that sense, I actually also think that the more experienced a person is when taking the leadership for the graduates, the higher you can set the bar sort to say, because you could demand more from them.

federica giuseppini 07:40

And can you tell me like again, just generally mean about you your leadership experience? Can you describe a situation where you think you had demonstrated to be a good leader? And why is that

Speaker 1 08:05

Yeah, in general, I think I'm a good leader, because I am quite, it is not important for me to shine in that role. It is much more important for me that that my, the people around me shine. And I'm experienced enough to know that when they shine that also reflects back on me. I had a situation a few years ago with a graduate who came up to me and said, we, we need to decide whether we would like to do this and this she was working on a project. And she had, she had two options and she wanted my input on how to do this. And I was extremely close to just saying, I think we should do this. But then I thought okay if she should grow in this She, she wouldn't learn anything from me just saying I think we should do this. And then I said, but what what do you think? Then she was kind of, I need to I need to go through it again in before I say what I think. And then she went through the thing and came back and said, I think we should choose option A. And I was kind of fine, then that is what we do. And she said, okay, but don't you need to read it? No, if you think we should go with option A we do that. And she was kind of, yeah, okay. I'll just go through it once more. And then she went through it once more came back and said, Now I'm definitely I think we should go for option A. And I was going to do that then that is what we do. And she said, okay, but what if it's wrong? What if it doesn't go the way we expect it to do? And my answer to that was, didn't we have a new situation? And then then we will do something else. And I'm all behind you all the way. And if you have a need first to say that it is me who have made the decision, then that is fine. I'm not taking it out on you, I just want you to take ownership of the, of the project and also the choice. And I realized afterwards I mean, I it was more a intuition that made me do as I did in the in the situation, but I realized afterwards that she was much more she actually took ownership of the decision the whole way through. And if it if I will probably have chosen exactly the same or I would have chosen to save option A but the big difference here was that that the way, the way I managed to do this, I made her take ownership of it and I didn't over-rule her or make made it easy for her in any way.

federica giuseppini 11:08

So you just fostered, let's say, a safe environment to make her feel that it's okay. Like you just take your decision. Let's see how it goes and then.

Speaker 1 11:18

Exactly, exactly.

federica giuseppini 11:20

And you think that that changed her afterwards?

Speaker 1 11:23

Yes. Yeah. And it changed her in a way that you can actually still see today because she's extremely. She believes in herself and she is extremely strong in discussions because she knows if she prepares in the right way she she can make a difference.

federica giuseppini 11:50

Then let's be leery I mean, that's the best thing you can see you know your, how much they change because also because of your behavior,

Speaker 1 12:00

Exactly. But that is exactly what I like about being a manager for requests. That is exactly what I like. But it was I mean, I was so close to just taking the decision for her and that that means that it's also a turning point in, in, in my career, you could say, because I realized that that the huge difference could actually be done if I didn't take a decision. So it's difficult. I mean, I'm trying to say that it's, it's difficult a and you have to let let people give people space and let them actually take the responsibility.

federica giuseppini 12:44

All right. So next question, talking a little bit more about leadership generally. How would you define the role of a leader, any leader?

Speaker 1 12:56

I see a leader very much as a As a person who should remove obstacles on the on the way for his or her manager or his or her employees and also guide guide people and challenge people.

federica giuseppini 13:19

And like if you think about like this ideal leader, how would collaboration look like with here or her?For you?

Speaker 1 13:35

That would be a leader who sets that our direction and then make it clear for people how, how their contribution fits into the overall contribution and takes into account the differences that different people have and make the difference differences and assets more than problem.

federica giuseppini 14:03

Okay. So it's, you know, like creating this environment around the employees?

Speaker 1 14:09

Yes a learning environment. And also, I mean it people sharing their learning, and both the successes but also their failures. I think we can learn a lot more from failures than from successes. I'm not saying we shouldn't celebrate successes, because I think we should. But I think failures are also to be celebrated somehow

federica giuseppini 14:34

learning experience?

Speaker 1 14:35

yeah, exactly. I mean, I think there's another side to leadership as well because most leaders have a leader above them and and half of the work is to lead a team the other half is to make sure that you support your leader and that is what I mean when I talk about direction to make sure that that that we actually moving in the direction that is demanded or needed from the leader above you.

federica giuseppini 15:08

Okay? So you take in like you have to take everything into consideration. That's also why like in the first survey I asked what the time division of your you know, because I mean, when people think of leaders, they think just okay you work with people, you just like, make them do the work kind of but people forget you have your own work, and you're an employee yourself. So it's, you know, it's very interesting to see how you, like you divide your time among all of those, you know, like your own work, and then your employees, but then again, you know, thinking about your, like, where the leadership comes from, right. So that is interesting. And if we think of Nordea's values, right, so passion, collaboration, ownership and courage, if I'm not wrong, what do they mean to you, and which one of these values do you think that is the best relates the best your definition of leadership or your approach of leadership?

Speaker 1 16:10

ownership. Yeah, I think ownership because ownership is a profound value for me. And by ownership I don't mean that you that one person needs to solve all the problems a body this way more. It is more affects that that you need to be clear on a problem and be clear on what you do and be clear about what you don't do. And make sure to if you see a problem, make sure to address it in in the right way. I mean, and then on the second or a split first place comes courage, because I think courage is also important. I think it's important to challenge your employees but much more important, I think it is to challenge your managers to challenge upwards and make sure that that what you're asked to do actually makes sense. And I'm not saying that my managers asked me to do something that doesn't make sense, but sometimes they don't explain why we're doing a specific thing.

federica giuseppini 17:44

So is this like, for instance, I know that you Nordea has these evaluation process like PLD and then monthly, you know, how do you evaluate the performance of your employees?

Speaker 1 18:01

very much based on the feedback I get or take it both in terms of what the feedback says, but also in terms of what the feedback doesn't say.

federica giuseppini 18:16

Anything that relates to reality, like do you think that's quite precise? Like how, you know, like, would you would you change something in this process? Would you add something?

Speaker 1 18:30

That's a good question. And I'm tempted to say no, a but on the other hand, a when you ask whether it's precise, I would say that to the extent that you think that perception is reality, then it is precise, precise. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 18:56

But it's just because you know, each individual maybe graduates work with different teams. Because they're rotations, right? So sometimes it's hard for them at the beginning, maybe I'm just assuming, I have no idea. Maybe it's hard for them to understand the environment and the people they're working with because they change continuously. So maybe at first, the perception of others could be that they I'm not saying they're lost, but it takes a little bit of time to, you know, get on truck. So, I don't know, I wonder if performance in that sense is just a little bit too subjective, because it could change between team and team like the teams they work with.

Speaker 1 19:34

But it is still precise in the in the context that it is given. And it might be that the context is irrelevant or or we need to change that. But but still it is it is relevant in the context. But that is actually also where I tend to challenge both What the feedback is, but also what is the what is

not included in the feedback. Let's say a graduate asked for feedback and get good feedback back that you are doing a good job in, and that is of course nice, but you can't really use it for anything. I mean, exactly, you can say, Okay, I'm doing good. Yes. But but in what way? Are you doing good, but is it specifically is it that you're doing good? And if you should do even better and that is what we are striving for? If you should do even better, what you do you didn't do? So a feedback saying you're doing good is actually not of any value in my mind. So that is where I would challenge and say okay, what is it? What is this you need to get more, you need to ask people to be more specific here because you need to grow. So the it is It's not as if you were you need to have good feedback like this. You need to have more specific feedback and good feedback is of course, fine. But I think that especially with graduates, they need to be challenged.

federica giuseppini 21:16

But also by the good feedback, I mean, you can still be precise and a little bit more focused so you know what you do, right but you also know what where you can improve so both. I think the system it's a little hard maybe because I it's, it's just people might not be hundred percent honest. First of all, because it might be a little bit time consuming for everyone because it's it really is like, every time every two months you've been asked, you know, to give feedback to so many people. So that's why I was wondering, maybe there is another approach that you know, the bank could take or, just making it a little bit more systematic instead of so descriptive because people don't take the time I'm not sure. I think it's a it's a it's interesting because you as a leader, I mean, of course you want to think that I'm using want to form people, but normal employees, you know, like they just like their job and might not take the time or the interest to do so.

Speaker 1 22:20

I think that there might be a cultural issue. And also when you mentioned generations, I'm not sure whether this is a generational thing or it is more and a time of life thing. Because I can definitely recognize what you're saying. But I would also say that if you don't give a profound feedback, it is hard to expect to get it And I think that constructive feedback is also to tell people what they can do better. I mean, it's not, it is not negative to tell people what they can do better,

federica giuseppini 23:13

It is the best thing you can do.

Speaker 1 23:15

Exactly. But I'm not saying it's easy. And I think over time, you also tend to learn who should you ask for feedback and who shouldn't you. And it might not be relevant to ask 10 people for feedback, it might be relevant to ask the right three people for feedback.

federica giuseppini 23:38

Okay, and when we talk about the bank, about Nordea. How would you describe leadership practices? Just generally.

Speaker 1 23:49

Oh, that's a difficult one. I don't think we're that good at leadership. Actually.

federica giuseppini 23:55

Why is that?

Speaker 1 23:58

I don't think we are measured on leadership. I think it and I also think that some of the disciplines that you should carry out as a group leader are difficult and cumbersome.

federica giuseppini 24:17

For example? if you have a person who is not performing it's difficult. Well, it's different when you have graduates, but let's say in a development team, if you have a person that is not performing and you address that and you end by throwing him out, you might not get a replacement. Which means that that you know, that you are better off accepting what you have then not having this person. I mean, we in that sense We are not ambitious enough in my mind. Then how would you change that? Would you be more about training and coaching and improving performances? Or would you just change the way you you hire people or?

Speaker 1 25:18

both. I would, I would very much like to have more focus on actually developing people.

federica giuseppini 25:31

And you think the bank, is not giving you enough to leaders, maybe even enough time or enough resources or?

Speaker 1 25:46

Enough, enough time. I mean, you could, you could just have it as a KPI. If you've all leaders have a leadership KPI and take that out of the people pulse. Then you would see a different leadership,

federica giuseppini 26:05

Interesting... how would you measure that? based on what?

Speaker 1 26:10

you can do it in different ways. You can, you can ask your older team members a if if they compare with an ideal manager how or how would they then evaluate their manager and you can ask managers, managers of managers to evaluate all their team members and say the leaders they have below them it should say, okay, but the How do they evaluate teach mentors that that could be one way

federica giuseppini 26:49

Okay, interesting because it's, you know, leadership is so subjective. That is really hard to measure. That's why I'm asking.

Speaker 1 27:13

Yeah, but i think that i don't i don't think it can be a an objective science. But I think that if you can put focus on it just by measuring something. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 28:03

And what is the biggest challenge you have faced in leading people?

Speaker 1 28:13

The biggest challenge I have faced in leading people... there is the this discrepancy when people have a different picture of themselves compared to what everybody else around them have.

federica giuseppini 28:33

Do you think that's a matter of personality?

Speaker 1 28:37

That's an extremely good question. Mmm...Yeah. You know, I'm studying psychology alongside with my work, and that is why I'm so hesitant to just say yes. I think it is a maybe partly personality and partly a experience. So if you were experience is that you are good manager or you're doing good. And if people and we're now we're back to the feedback issue. If people around you have confirmed this several times, then you tend to believe that you're doing good.

So if somebody comes up to you and say that you're not really doing that good. You would say, I don't understand that. I think I'm doing good and all these 10 people have told me that, that I'm doing good. And then you one person is saying that I'm not doing good. So I have in total 11 people who thinks that I'm doing good one that thinks that I'm not doing good. So I must be doing good. This tend not to be the biggest problem with the graduates, it is a bigger problem with people who have... more experienced people. Because they have somehow been put into an understanding that they are doing good, that what they're doing is exactly what is needed. And that is hard to change sometimes.

federica giuseppini 30:31

That's why they're a little more resilient to change. Do you think that's, do you think that's also like, because Nordea. I mean, that's how I perceived that, at least, it's very hierarchical, and in the sense that has so many layers of manager management. And do you think that it's, maybe that's also why communication is so not hard, but it's not really fostered? So like, if you would open up and like It may give a little bit more horizontal organizational structure, do you think that would change with the feedback as well? So people will be more like... also more informal, kind of?

Speaker 1 31:13

No, no, I don't think that will change that will change it. That is a cultural change that that needs to come. But I agree it needs to come from from the top. I think the problem around the many management leaders is that that is actually back to leadership demands that we don't demand enough out of our leaders. And then we somehow think that once you have been at once a leader, always a leader, so you actually don't change people's roles. That that was very personal....But I don't think it's hierarchical in in in that sense, there are some some more formal things that we need to make sure that the managers do also in terms of communication also in terms of crisis communication in like time we have right now. But apart from that, I think good leaders are open leaders. And then you can basically talk to whoever in the organization, but it requires leaders who are able to, to handle that. And sometimes, leaders are people who thinks that leadership is about taking cool decisions. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 32:55

Have you participated to some of the leadership trainings at Nordea?

Speaker 1 33:07

Yes, yes.

federica giuseppini 33:09

What do you think of them?

Speaker 1 33:15

I have to say that the last thing I participated is, is was really the way and I think that was rubbish. However, I think that it always makes sense to bring people with the same roles together and make them discuss their challenges and also make them understand the common demands.

federica giuseppini 33:42

Okay. Do you think like, what is mainly about do you think it's about you know, how do you evaluate or like, how are you a good leader or a manager or is it more like, how can I lead people? I mean, you know, you're such Psychology. So do you think it's more managerial or more like people oriented?

Speaker 1 34:05

I think it's more people oriented. And I have to admit that I don't notice a new leadership training. I'm looking very much forward to that. But I think it always makes sense. And I recall the first leadership training I was in but that is more than 15 years ago where I liked the fact that we were brought together we had the same road but we were brought together across the bank.

federica giuseppini 34:42

What did you find out?

Speaker 1 34:45

I think the the most important thing that still stands is one of the directors members, who said that you should always be employing people who are wiser than you, then you can joke about that and say for some of us that is not very difficult, but a if you want to develop something a you, you would have to raise the bowels. You'd have to have people who are smarter than you. And that is also what I enjoy with the whole being a manager for graduates because all the people I employ as graduates are smarter than me. Meaning it might be I have more experience. But But intelligence wise education wise, they are smarter than me.

federica giuseppini 35:53

That's very interesting.

Speaker 1 35:56

Yeah, but it is also tough to do because you need to put yourself aside and say, Okay, what is important here, it is actually important to to bring development into the organisation.

federica giuseppini 36:11

I mean, when I when I think about younger leaders trying to, you know, lead graduates maybe, then they could feel a little bit with a fear maybe intimidated. I mean, they probably wouldn't choose hundred percent only people, you know, if you say smarter than than them because maybe that might jeopardize their you know you're in your organization who knows? I don't know. So experience I guess also really counts in this in this mindset because you know, you have so much experience so you're not afraid of that?

Speaker 1 36:49

No, you could say so. But I mean, in that sense, I don't think it has been easy because I have also been sometimes I get questions where I say, I don't know what to answer here. A and in that sense, I'm also asking myself whether I'm doing the right thing. Because it would have been easier to just employ somebody who did as I told them to do.

federica giuseppini 37:21

I don't know.. I see that more as managerial non leader oriented, you know, like, okay, we have to get this stuff done I know you can do it, just do that.

Speaker 1 37:34

You're right. You're absolutely right.

federica giuseppini 37:36

Okay. All right. I'm gonna ask you a few more questions, and then I'm gonna let you go.

Speaker 1 37:42

Yes, that's fine.

federica giuseppini 37:43

Can you describe a situation where you have experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 37:51

Yes. There's this manager. Yeah, maybe I should be maybe I should use myself as an example rather than somebody else.

federica giuseppini 38:17

Up to you, whatever you feel it's just bad.. not not the most effective leadership.

Speaker 1 38:26

Okay, I have this example. Well, there's a leader on a rather high level. He has leaders under him and, and they also have leaders on them. And then there's a very unexperienced person that is, I actually think it is a student worker, or at least a very junior person. That is part of a project and then this high level leader meets the younger person on the coffee machine or something and say, yeah, how does it go with that project? And she's kind of Yeah, it doesn't really go that well. I don't understand why they're doing this. And this, this and this, there's no progress this, this, this doesn't work either. So on so on. So and then the the high level leader goes back to the managers below him and he says, What is this? I hear this isn't this Why aren't you taking control over this isn't this and the reason I think it is extremely bad leadership is that it falls back on the on the junior person. The person didn't have any intention of of making it false at all. She just have an intention of answering I mean, her boss job or her boss's boss's boss, drops by and ask something and she gives her impression of that. And in that sense, I think it is important that you as a leader, think, Okay, how am I going to address this in a way? So I don't compromise the person who have told me this, but I still get to do something about it.

federica giuseppini 40:20

Makes sense, because that also closes up the communication and exactly feedback as well. It's just

Speaker 1 40:27

exactly because next time he asks to not say anything and that is and I was amazed, I mean, we are talking about an experienced leader here. A I was talking amazed and said, Okay, I can find myself in a situation where I get extremely angry about something. A, but but I I try to consider how I want to address it in order not to compromise people. I also have a saying with my own employees that they shouldn't ask questions that they don't want answers to. And, yeah, it is difficult because sometimes you have to tell them that even though they don't ask they get the answer's

federica giuseppini 41:18

Ahah. All right, and can you choose three adjectives that a leader should never have? Like personality traits or whatever you can think of.

Speaker 1 41:35

inconsistency. Maybe being cynical, maybe not. Maybe not. You could say lack of empathy, if you can, if you can say that what what is lack of empathy? That was my thinking about it being cynical sympathy yeah for me, there's a lot of in the word inconsistent because I think it is important to be to be consistent. And if if you are not consistent, you create a lot of uncertainty around you which is unhealthy in in a lot of ways. But, I mean I could also say introvert but but I don't think that's a problem. It is more maybe your lack of self knowledge

federica giuseppini 43:48

okay so awareness of yourself?

Speaker 1 43:50

Yes. Yes.

federica giuseppini 43:53

Like in the sounds.. mm.. just knowing yourself and what limitations are when you lead someone or?

Speaker 1 44:06

exactly. Because when I say is it a problem to be an introverted leader? No, it is not a problem. You just have to know that that is how you are. And and be aware of of how to handle this.

federica giuseppini 44:19

Okay. Okay. All right, and then some background information I need. Um, I hope it's okay. I'm gonna ask you how old you are. Because there's a study about generations.

44:32

Yeah, that's fine. I'm 55.

federica giuseppini 44:35

Perfect. And what's your official position in the organization?

44:41

That is chief project manager. Or you could take these off employees.

federica giuseppini 44:48

Okay. Perfect. And do you think is there anything I should have asked about later. Something that I'm missing to know?

Speaker 1 45:07

No, I think you had good questions. I said very good questions. That also took me true. Full journey, I would say

federica giuseppini 45:18

that's really nice. And a couple more things. This is just optional you absolutely don't have to. But if you want you can share your people both results with me. Yeah, I mean, just if you feel and then you also because I had a head of students you know, you know, that I was talking to and they also share the the thing the leadership, one, I can tell you the name so leadership index survey, I don't know if you have that.

Speaker 1 45:55

No, I don't.

federica giuseppini 45:57

That's that's very okay. one last favor. Do you know someone? Maybe you're not necessarily super high level but someone like you can connect me with someone that could be interested in having an interview with me.

Speaker 1 46:15

What would be your aim? I mean, what should they? What criteria should they fulfill?

federica giuseppini 46:23

So right now I interviewed head of students and students. I'm gonna do head of graduates and graduates and then I just wanted one higher level for sure. And some employees. So just as a team, were someone that comes to your mind.

Speaker 1 46:45

Yeah, I could, but they are I think they are extremely busy with it. Okay, let me think about that and come back because I would like to ask them also, whether it's Okay,

federica giuseppini 47:01

of course. Perfect. And now I'm gonna send you the second serve. And I I promise we're, we're finished.

Speaker 1 47:09

That's perfect.

federica giuseppini 47:11

I hope I didn't take too much of your time.

Speaker 1 47:13

No, no, it's fine. It's absolutely fine.

federica giuseppini 47:20

And again, I have to thank you so much for participating.

9.1.6 Interview with Kristy

Thu, 5/7 4:12AM • 51:58

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, leader, leadership, team, person, bit, listening, lead, important, general, good, feel, work, management, necessarily, specific, perceived, based, talk, meeting

Federica 0:00

Awesome. So, can I ask you what's your official position in there? You're an executive advisor, right?

Speaker 1 0:11

Yeah, I actually have two positions. Now so I still work as executive advisor and then I am also having the technology strategy.

Federica 0:27

Okay.

And are you aligned manager of some people or do you not manage anyone?

Speaker 1 0:34

Yes. I have a small team.

Federica 0:36

How many?

Speaker 1 0:37

We are five people.

Unknown Speaker 0:40

nice. Okay. And did you.. when you started on or did you have this team or did it come later in time?

Unknown Speaker 0:49

Yeah later. When I started at Nordea, I worked more as a individual specialis. I was in a different area, to work in risk management at the time. And then for the past two, what is about two and a half years, two years or so, about two years, I've been working as executive advisor. But at the same time, two or three months ago, I also started working as kind of technology strategy. So now I have both roles, essentially. So I got I started working with this team about two and a half months ago, but in people that I would say about half of them I knew already, who had been working with strategy previously and in my previous role I've interfaced along with and then the other half are new members that are also internationally located.

Federica 1:41

And so is this your first experience leading orders? Or?

Speaker 1 1:48

At Nordea yes. I would say yes and no ahah, I've been in positions where it's always been very small teams. And I would say that it's the first time I'm leading a team in an official capacity.

Federica 2:06

And before starting this new role with this, you know, leading people and stuff. Well, is there something that you were afraid of?

Speaker 1 2:15

Something that I was afraid of? related to this role you mean to people management?

Federica 2:23

Um, I mean, I would say that, in the immediate...afraid is probably a strong word, but maybe I could say that. It's making sure that everyone's needs are met, and that everyone's considerations, you know, there are people who, so essentially, if I give some context, the team that I'm reading is very senior, and they're people that have been working for decades in the field and who have held much more senior positions in the past as well. A lot of experience and so on. So it was just I did have a little bit of, you know, a wondering of whether the fact that I'm a little bit younger than some of my team members or that I have less experience in that field than some of my team members who be perceived in a way that is not, you know, where they might feel like they've been stepped over or something like that. So I really didn't want that. I wanted to make sure that everybody felt like you know, they are an equally valuable member of the team and that they are essentially the people who are doing the work at the end of the day. So that's that's subject matter expertise.

Speaker 1 2:23

Yes.

Federica 3:39

What were you looking forward the most?

Speaker 1 3:44

maybe making a difference just as an extent. So I think one of the things that this position is allowing for is having more say in the shape and division of where we're going and how we get there as well. So it is a really exciting. Working with strategy is a lot of it's very, very interesting for me, of course, but it really has an impact on on where we go and how we get there.

Federica 4:14

And can you describe to me a specific situation where you think you have demonstrated to be a good leader? Not necessarily at Nordea.

Speaker 1 4:26

I think in general, a lot of what I think I've received any kind of positive feedback in the later in the last couple of months, it has been due to the fact of being able to actually get some of the things done, and people have been waiting for for a little bit of time in the past, quite quickly. So I think that it's just it's just basically listening to people and making sure that they're heard and that, you know, we're working in an environment and you know, that that is very much based on the model mmh...Yeah, a lot of things are happening all the time, there are changes all the time you need to adapt. Like when you need to get things done. There's a lot of firefighting, there's very little room for stopping and thinking about the bigger picture because of time constraints and things like that. So one of the main things, I think, is just that we need to take this moment, because these times, we'll just stop and reflect as a team and listen to each other. Communication is probably one of the biggest things that is really, really important, I think in a team setting. And so one of the very first things we did is to have, you know, a team day but to actually structure it lay where we can all build it around communication, getting to know each other and just breaking down some of the barriers of the things that we think everybody has a chance to speak up basically. And I really tried to build it dynamic at least, as much as possible in a way that people can just feel like they can talk about it and talk to Trying to put in a focused way, you know, to sort of come to an outcome. So, yeah.

Federica 6:06

do you feel like there is a specific time where you, you know, you stop for a second and you realize, Hey, I'm actually doing a good job right now. Maybe just a comment that someone made you like, Can you tell me like a very specific situation where you felt like you did a good job as a leader.

Speaker 1 6:26

I have received some positive feedback, which is really nice, one of the first thing that comes to mind right now is.. I have one of my team members was in Sweden, and we got to meet only once. But I would say that shortly after we spent the time together, and that we started, you know, I say maybe about a month into, into her existence into the team. Someone else in Sweden who's not on my team, who I don't know very well actually contacted Me and wrote me an email to say that he had he had gone to meet with that person in the office and they had a talk and that he just wanted to let me know that there was really positive feedback coming out of, you know, the way that the team is functioning and how it's being set up, and so on. So he actually just reached out on his own to give me that feedback. And I thought that was really nice. So, of course, as someone who is just starting out with this new team, there are a lot of things that you're not entirely sure whether everyone is happy with or not. So it's good to hear. You know, the opinion of an independent person, so not someone who feels like they need to tell you something positive because you're their leader from the outside.

Federica 7:44

So you felt like you were truly doing something positive.

Speaker 1 7:52

I don't want to say Oh, yes, we're fantastic. But I can say that I think that it's a great team and that helps from the fact that people Together with each other are also really good and able to, you know, build what feels like a team really, really early on in the stage of being a new team. I think that's that's probably part of a huge part of why they're enjoying working there right now.

Federica 8:17

It's really nice. And if we talk about leadership a little bit more in general. Like how would you define the role of a leader like who is a leader to you?

Speaker 1 8:34

Well we had a lot of talks in the company lately about leaders versus manager and, you know, you're in business, right. So when you're, you know, about managers do the planning and controlling and penetrating excetera, you know, what is basically that. I mean, there's really tangible difference and you can see a little bit of people who are much more tasks oriented and you know getting execution done. A lot of times this is more associated to good management. You see that a lot right now with the Coronavirus, for example. They're, you know, situations that are, yeah, where, you know, you're kind of in a more, I guess, security type of situation, they make sure that everything is secured, that everything's operational, that things are working. That's very much management. People who are really good at task management and really good at executing things I think are really good managers are for all good type of situation. And to get things done in general, I think with people if you want to be a good leader, I think that it doesn't necessarily require an education. Like as much as something like management might become. You don't need to have financial backgrounds and the battling risk and everything else that needs to take place. It's more of a ability to speak, ability to influence maybe exert influence to a certain extent, you get the classical examples like Steve Jobs and, you know, people who are really enigmatic and really captivating and really able to speak and that kind of thing. So I think it's just the ability to connect with people exert a certain amount of influence in a positive way. So the old way or anything like that, but just connecting with people and and I don't know, maybe there's, to me, there's an element of admiration. So if I think about the people that I consider some of the best leaders that I've encountered, there's always been someone. Very often women, actually, but that's probably just incidental. But someone who might receive them was a role model that I admire, that I aspire to be like. For example, there's a person that I take mentorship from, you know, very rarely but ahah unfortunatly, not often enough, but who is someone that I perceive like, I would consider myself to be a good leader basically. Yeah, just role model.

Federica 11:15

Make sense. I actually agree with that. But is this person, your mentor? Did you have this person as a leader yourself? Or do you just like you said you perceive it as a good leader?

Speaker 1 11:30

Oh, yeah, it's not my leader. And when I asked her to be my mentor, she wasn't my leader at the time, either but we did have a brief period of time where she was my leader, so I guess you could say that, yes, I've experienced that part of it as well. And there's a lot of you know, empowering others. So making sure. I think one of the things that I used to think about back from the day was that if I get to the point where I'm leaving people I would have to be really, really good in my field, what I'm doing and really specialized. So if I'm, at the time I was in risk management and audit, you know, then I would be exceptional in auditing and risk management, stuff like that capabilities. But what I've realized more is that that's not really that important. What's more important is acknowledging and recognizing what the strengths are, and the weaknesses for every person on the team. And there are some really, you know, some people that will be always be much better specialists and really good at what they do. And it's about helping them to let that out, you know, to explore it as much as possible. So, people talk a lot about servant leadership, as well. I think that that's also something that that makes sense, especially in a place like the Nordics. I think it's very different in North America and my experiences there, it's a lot more hierarchical in that sense and here, it's just, you know, flattened out more, but I like that. I think it's good that we can all just, we all have different roles. It's not because one person is a leader they have a better role.

Federica 13:08

So do you still feel like it's some more of a flat organization idea, although there's so many leadership layers, like so many structures?

Speaker 1 13:17

Yeah, I think it depends on. I mean, okay, my perspective is flat, because probably because of where I work, I get a lot of information, I am able to do a lot of work with different people in different areas and so on. But I have heard of course, from other areas, that there's a big disconnect between some of the leadership and some of the more if you consider teams that have many degrees of separation that have very different role types, where you have people that for example, doing more development, programming and things that are very technical and very skill based, versus management, which is much more based on you know, communicating things, reporting things, etc. So there's a big disconnect sometimes between these and I think it's just because there's almost very little subcultures that form right in each of the areas. And sometimes there's a bit of an ... but I think it's just important to try to listen to people, no matter whatever it is that they're doing and try to understand what exactly where they're coming from, or something that shows kind of thing and that they there's a easier way to communicate with them then afterwards the relationship.

Federica 14:34

So this is when you try to do with your team? to step into their shoes?

Speaker 1 14:38

Yeah, I very much try to listen to what they have to say and everyone. Contrary to popular belief, I actually don't talk that much like I do right now. But I do like to, you know, listen to what people have to say, and there's always opportunities for picking on something picking up something that you don't necessarily get if you're just talking the whole time. So, yeah, it's just it's just trying to be receptive to that as much as possible.

Federica 15:13

Is there a way that you tried to do this? like, for instance, in a meeting, when you meet your team is there like a procedure and unofficial procedure that you do to make them open up in some ways?

Speaker 1 15:26

Yea I mean, you know, the usual things around the tables asking each other how are things, and, and we, I mean, I tried to have frequent one on one meetings to solve so make sure that every week we meet at least once, at least once in a team setting so that they know there's certain things that people don't necessarily fit into directory, but at the same time, it's good to also have everyone here very open a lot, which is really good. I mean, we focus a lot, of course on the tasks that we have to do. So that's just article it just needs to be done anyway. But we also have, we use a T site, where we have a lot of exchanges in the different craft something that is related to, you know, our findings on emerging technologies or what we think about our other thing that is, you know, maybe not necessarily something that we need to produce immediately, but when we actually are just sitting in doing more, like reflecting on how we can improve and sometimes it moves into more personal things and certain people depending on how they feel, but of course, with Coronavirus, everyone's very isolated, so we're trying to do a lot more. You know coffee talks and things like that and just trying to actually be human and then when each other and then we've also launched something, I guess you can call it a book club. That's what we call it anyway, turn the reboot door basically, just to try to step away from this firefighting of this, you know, daily everything. One person from the team was like, the topic that they consider as interesting to them is something that is related to strategy or related to something that's happening out there. And then, and then call in for for a meeting, essentially. So each one of us has to read whatever it is that they send out. So it could be an article from Harvard Business Review, or it could be, you know, whatever it might be. So everyone read up on it and it has do reflections and then the person who's the moderator for that particular topic, will that lead the discussion and ask the questions and then they get the chance to also you know, exercise some, some leadership and some decision making in that sense. So we take everyone takes turns to make and do it on a not so frequent basis.

Federica 17:56

No, that's great. I guess they they also feel like you said before For a little bit empowered, or it's always important to feel like you're learning something or pushing orders to learn something, right, so you grow together sounds really nice. But before you also said that, in the old days, you felt like you have to be the expert in a subject before leading someone. Right? Do you still feel that way?

Unknown Speaker 18:23

I think you have to have knowledge, knowledge, because a lot of the questions that I get from my team are required that, you know, a decision is made on something that is based on that knowledge. So yes, I still think that you need to have a good level of knowledge, but I don't think that you need to be the best and strongest and the technical ability. So it's a bit it's a bit different in our I think field because strategy is very, you know, you don't have necessarily a prescriptive way of doing things right. You just mean that a lot of it comes down to what makes sense. for your organization, what fits the most what the priorities are how we're aligning with it. So it's a little bit different than saying, for example, if I were leading a programmer team and someone came, and ask me how do you perform this routine or whatever? ahah I would definitely be able to answer most of the questions. But I think in general, if I'm just trying to generalize the best for any team, I think it's important that you have the understanding that you're able to, because then you can have those conversations with people where you could be on the same, you know, sort of plane of communication and you can talk to each other. But at the same time, you don't have to be the best You don't have to be, you know, the sort of subject matter expert, you have to trust that your people are the experts and they will make the decisions.

Federica 19:49

Do you think like they would feel like you should be more prepared to them, like their leaders should be more prepared, and more knowledgeable in some ways?

Speaker 1 20:05

yeah, I think a lot of people do feel that way for sure. Because you know, you... Yeah, the people leader has, you know, some of the functions that are a little bit maybe less exciting, like administrative parts of it or you have to make sure that you've picked up this BB in the Union process, that kind of thing. But in the in the parts where you interact with people, most of the time it comes down to, you know, it could be personal issues, for example, in which case, I think it really depends on the person, much based on the skill set or anything like that, or the expertise. But when it comes to, I'm not sure how to do my job, what do I do next? If you if you don't know when, if you're not the expert, then you need to, I think still step in and say, Okay, well, I don't know. But I think that if you look at this person in this team, let's connect with them and make sure that you can getting permission, so it's more about facilitating, and making others get their job done and removing obstacles then it if of having all the answers.

Federica 21:11

And if we talk about Nordea, how would you describe leadership practices there?

Speaker 1 21:21

I think it's ehm, there's there's been a big movement to try to get things to work based on culture and based on values, you know, the Nordea values: the passion, collaboration excetera. We, of course, have many new people leadership team as well in place from a few months ago. So things might be different going forward, I don't know. But there's been I think a lot of a lot more focus on value based leadership, then there has been in other organizations that I've seen before.

Federica 22:01

Since the new leadership team came in?

Speaker 1 22:05

No no in general at Nordea. I don't know if it is a Nordic wide thing, or it's a little bit more of an approach, or in Denmark or in the Nordics. But in general, I would say that leadership that I've experienced here versus in Canada before is a lot more flat. There's a lot culturally speaking, people are not afraid to speak up to their leaders. And and they will come up we'll get people that will speak to like the CIO, for example, and have absolutely no problem with saying you're wrong. I think it should be businesses. And that's very different from a lot of other places where you can't say that because you're associated with it. Yeah. So for people, people are really to actually speak their minds, especially in Denmark, it's really.. yeah, I think there's a difference. You can actually see it in Poland, for example, we have a baby Poland, right. And we have leaders and we have employees as well. And the leadership style is different than being in general and the approach to life leaders is different. So there's a lot more respect for hierarchy the fact that there is a hierarchy.

Federica 23:30

Do you have some of your team members in Poland or it's just in here?

Speaker 1 23:35

I have here finland and sweden.

Federica 23:41

Among those who don't notice, such as big difference?

Speaker 1 23:47

Not at all, everyone is quite open and speaks freely.

Federica 23:53

Okay. Is there something that you would change about leadership practices right now within Nordea.

Speaker 1 24:07

I think it's down to. Yeah, I mean, it's down to people, individuals in general, it's I think it's a little bit difficult to say this is what a good leader should be, and you need to learn how to beat it. I think it's more if you fit to the overall and I think that this is how it's done anyway today is that if you fit the overall ways in which leadership is perceived, as, you know, being more value driven, being more listening, and active listening and that kind of thing, I think if you're able to think of a general description of that, then you're probably fit to lead in your own way as well incorporated with the way in which fits with Nordea and its values. So it's, it's hard to say I don't think you can really just get a guidebook until To the beginning, I was wondering about, Well, okay, some what what specific tasks Do I need to fill, not from a people perspective, but from the administrative perspective? So now we're in January, what exactly do I need to make sure that performance evaluations, how do I work with .. system, where you don't really get a manual either you just kind of have to figure it out. I would say that, you know, it would be good to have... I guess a place where you can have a little bit more guidance at the beginning in terms of the procedural things, not really for the people.

Federica 25:37

I know that there are some trainings, leadership trainings have you taken part to any of those?

Speaker 1 25:44

Yeah. I've taken transformational leadership training, maybe a year or two ago, which was very, very value based very much on getting to know who you are and how you reflect and you know

how you react And whether what you are doing makes sense with where you actually aspire to be. So you know, that kind of training that is very introspective and focused on yourself basically, on learning to say, I think, instead of thinking in general people believe that just taking their ownership of things. I have and then as part of this induction into this rule, I have taken some more and more procedure based type of trainings but it wasn't necessarily communicated Okay, now you need to take this it's more I realized that actually have to take some trainings and some of the procedural ones as well.

Federica 26:51

So how did you feel about a transformational training, do you still reflect on it now that you're a leader?

Speaker 1 27:00

Yeah, oh yeah, because it was, I mean, you spent essentially a good amount of time. So it's three full days but spread out over about maybe a month or so. So you actually spend a good amount of time where you also need to do work on the side of it like going and interviewing people about yourself and getting honest feedback, you know, performing personality tests and things like that. So of course, all of those things I think, kind of build up to getting me to understand myself better and in turn understand, you know, probably interact with others as well. So I think it's a reflection on the person a little bit and you understand a little bit about yourself, you can apply it to the outside, so yeah it is connected to your ability to lead or where you want to be.

Federica 27:48

So you use try to do that right now. We tried to say, maybe they like you said, more ownership. Well. What you think?

Speaker 1 27:58

Yeah, I think a lot of things Just realize that you do. So you might say, Okay, I haven't necessarily thought about this, but actually not that I think about it, yes, I do this or now that I think about it, I don't do that, you know, so again, wants you to understand yourself a little bit better. And then when you have this awareness, just like with anything else, right? You recognize what the issue is or you recognize what the positive thing is that you're doing is and then you just. once you have this awareness you can move towards change towards transforming.

Federica 28:31

Now, can you tell me about specific time very specific again, when you have experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 28:44

Yeah. Let me think of one that would be relevant. Yeah, I can say I mean, in my immediate surroundings, I can give an example of someone close to me, if I can say that?

Federica 29:05

Yeah, it's up to you where you really felt, if that came to your mind then it's great.

Speaker 1 29:10

The first thing that came into my mind maybe because it is recent but the person, that person basically was working for about six months in this place and the leader there. I don't think that they interface more than four times or something like that. Like, okay, you're hired. Now you need to do the following. And, in turn, turns out really quickly that these people who are working on an operational level would come up and bring issues that they're facing, essentially outside operational level. And the leader would just tell them each time, you know, this is how it's done, because this is what's better. Essentially, you guys don't really know what you're

talking about. is the way that things have always been done and it works well. So we need to continue with the way that they're being done. And that alienates people who are working at an operational level into, you know, the fact that ok well, you don't know, because you're not out there with us. You're not out there doing this type of work. You're sitting in the tower, and you have your own sort of world where you're managing from a distance. And based on, I guess, more theoretical approaches, so it's just, yeah. A leader who is not out there with the people, someone who is essentially sitting away separately and not getting any feedback, and not taking any of the suggestions and not you know, factoring in any people who are working. I think that's terrible management, terrible leaders for sure, because, and I say also, manager because it's not sustainable. If you cannot, if you alienate your workforce and you're actually doing the work and the work, there's going to be demotivated. The work is not going to get done. And it's very, very likely that there's a lot of processes that are not being taken into account for them probably losing out on efficiency and the ability to deliver things of quality. Because the person is just not responsive to take any kind of commentary and any kind of feedback.

Federica 31:25

And can you tell me on a specific situation where you experience good leadership?

Speaker 1 31:31

I can do that. Yeah, I mean, I have to go back to the person who I'm also referring to her as a mentor. In the time that I was, I was under her leadership. I have seen her go through really hard times, both personally and at the office and all of that, and I'm even talking about, I think, dead of best friend and I have seen her completely color through that, and really separate the way in which she does not allow any of the things that are happening to her personally, nerve, whatever the case or any of the stress factors to bleed on to the rest of the team, and to the rest of the organization. And without being, you know, completely disconnected and closed off. So still showing vulnerability and doing your image strong and empowering way. And I think that that's very admirable. So essentially, the ability to protect the team from additional stress factors, and, you know, being able to sort of disconnect the things I think is really, really crazy. That I probably would need to work more on if I were ever got in that situation where, you know, it's difficult to create the separation between, you know, between the emotional part of it and then the part where you're actually a leader, and you're there to be a role model for people as well. As much as possible. So, I mean, I would have work to do before I get to that level, but I think that it's fantastic. And it's really good leadership to not go and unload on everybody, but to actually protect people from that aspect as well, at the same time, showing the vulnerability in the fact that you are going through something

Federica 33:36

and you think, do you think you picked this example like why do you think this was the first thing that came to your mind? Because I mean, I'm sure you have experienced some good leadership, like.

Speaker 1 33:46

Yeah, I think it's probably because it's the furthest away from mastering. So I think, let's say, Oh, this person was really great. communicating with people or whatever it is that I consider that I could be okay or pretty easily. And I don't necessarily see as much aspiration for me to try to emulate that. But when it's something where I would, if I put myself in those shoes, I think that I would be just completely terrible at it comparatively, then I definitely want to improve. I think it's probably the reason why it came to mind first.

Federica 34:31

So in some ways we can, let's say, read this through role model. You know, thing we said before, so maybe you we can say you take role models of people that, of course, you want to be close to

like, similar to as a leader. But it's very interesting that you say that, you know, it's might be something that you're missing, not missing, but you can work better, you can improve anyhow.

Speaker 1 34:56

It is about the inspiration factor, I mean swinging when you see people that inspire people that are extremely great personalities out there, it's often also because I can't express myself that way or whatever it might be. So I think it often plays into the parts that you perceived. weaknesses and expressed by someone that is really strong at that.

Federica 35:26

That's usually what I noticed, I think, just in life and it's very interesting because I've been getting a lot of this. This is definitely one of the things that struck my attention while making this research. So it's

Speaker 1 35:40

very cool. I can't wait to read about it!

Federica 35:49

I want to I want to prepare a briefing for all the people that participated at least, but I think I'm attending it in September because I plan to evolve the few interviews. But then I got really into the topic. And then people were starting talking to me and I was like, Okay, this is really cool. I want to find out more and now I have almost up to 20 interviews. Anyway, I have another question, can you choose three attributes that a leader should never have

Speaker 1 36:22

three attributes that a leader should never have? I would say perfectionism, close mindedness and selfishness.

Federica 36:47

Okay. Why do you think you pick these?

Speaker 1 36:50

Because I think that those are all obstructions to being able to build a good team. So someone who is self driven, I think it comes across and it hurts the team in general, it's hard to bring the team together. And to help people be motivated and actually want to do good work, when it's very clear that the leader is acting in their own self interest, you know, career climbing or whatever, whatever it might be expressed as perfectionism because you can really get down into the detail of things and never really execute perfectly. I find that it's really, really easy. And I've had that issue. issue but I've had symptoms before as a specialist where everything has to be perfect and you know, quality. But if you're a leader, and you're focusing on that, and you're picking up every single thing that each of your employees are doing and saying, we need to go back and change this and put the comments on that and you know all the little details. I think it demotivates people as well because people also need to be recognized for doing good work and not everyone has the same perception of what perfection is anyway. So it's completely pointless to even strive for it because when you're perfect is is not when someone else's is so if you tell them you're not doing a good enough job because you're not 100% in line with what I expected, you know, a good job. It's, I think it's very destructive. Yeah, what's the other one except selfish? Now I forget.

Federica 38:38

Like you said, like close minded.

Speaker 1 38:41

Yes exactly, close minded, you are a better listener ahah. and closed mindedness for the same reasons. Again, if you have this narrow vision of how things should be Though it's going to be very difficult to actually grow, to allow others to grow by experimenting with different ways of doing things. They lead with, you know why it's really important to have diversity in the team as well. And that kind of thing. I think it's really important to have a broad view, as much as possible. get different perspectives that can challenge each other.

Federica 39:21

I mean, I guess that's what supportive day transformational leadership kind of. It's, that's how that's actually how I got interested in the topic as well. In my leadership class, we talked about management and leadership and then of course, transformational leadership. So it's very cool. And can you choose three attributes that a leaders should always have.

Speaker 1 39:45

Yeah I'll go back to the listening, actively listening and actually taking the time to try to understand where someone is coming from Because it's only in that way that you're able to really extract what is going on with the situation, sometimes there are things that are left outside and there really are people that have a very hard time expressing themselves that is very much something that.. I mean you need to learn to feel with different type of people and to try to understand things from their prospective so... yeah just really active, attentive listening, not all the time is not possible but once in a while you can really get a lot listening to others like that. I am going to bring back aspirational, if someone... again the best leaders are often people that ----- in one way or another, there is something that they have, but it is very difficult to learn, you know, it just something that people might see in you or they might not, but I think it's important. Creativity maybe? Being able to think outside the box, it is kind of the opposite of what a leader should not have, ahah so no new information there, I think it should be a good communicator, I guess that tights up with being a good listener but it is also about being able to express things in an interesting and engaging way, to be able to say the right things that really then tell you what you are trying to convey and tailor to the right body, like people are so... like talking between talking to a – member and talking to a board member it is very difficult to convey the message.

Makes sense, what is the biggest challenge you have faced in leading people?

Well the biggest challenge within this team is that when I started 2/3 of them were on their way out, basically they just wanted to do something different so I think the challenge there was before anything was to starting conversations even before I had the announcement so it is not very related but

9.1.7 Interview with Morten

Thu, 5/7 1:14PM • 46:08

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

leader, tasks, organisation, boss, people, employee, kpi, bank, kpis, goals, leadership, motivated, setting, valued, aligned, months, nice, team, manager, framework

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

Speaker 1 00:01

Just the things that we're going to talk about today is that you assignment of something that's going to be published.

federica giuseppini 00:11

So it's my, it's my thesis, but everything is like, I'm not gonna publish the interviews, and the people is going to be, like completely confidential and anonymous. I mean, it's purely for my research like for me to understand what's going on, but it's, it's also very general. So you're probably gonna feel like you can share because there is so much, you know, sensitive things. But just to give you a little bit of a background, I am researching on leadership and generations, like I said, and I'm hoping to figure it out.

Speaker 1 00:53

Can you hear me sometime you're dropping out... Just thinking about sitting in another room. I didn't call you on my computer, but it didn't work out. Connection. I mean more for you than for me.

federica giuseppini 01:36

Nice. So so I was telling you, I'm doing this research to figure out if there is a mismatch between generations and ways of leading people, right? And so I just want some, it's gonna be more about like the feelings and about your perception of leadership in general. So it's you, you'll see but To start, you were a student at Noreda?

Speaker 1 02:03

YEs

federica giuseppini 02:06

for how long?

Speaker 1 02:09

Well, I've been a student of the year for like all my study time. So when I started my bachelor's degree so that is yeah, five years ago but in total I have been working 10 years at the bank.

federica giuseppini 02:27

and now you are a business analyst?

Speaker 1 02:30

Yes

federica giuseppini 02:35

Okay, so this is your first time. You know, I'm in the office?

Speaker 1 02:45

Probably full time contract but I took a break between my master and my bachelor for one and a half years and I was working full time so Again like also yeah working full time and that kind of business analyst role time so in like full time bank on a full time student contract was also give a different perspective maybe..

federica giuseppini 03:24

that's really good and can you describe me a situation like a specific situation where you felt rewarded and appreciated by your leader, one of your leaders?

Speaker 1 03:38

Yeah when I was when I was a student, well we have this we want bonuses in Nordea where your your your leader can put you in position to get our financial reward for the job you have

done. And kind of the position that I'm working mmh a lot way much than I was supposed to do my leader like, mmm, we never kind of talk about this when we had one to one. So I'm just saying like, how much you're worth and kind of the tasks that are completed and so on. So my leader he put me in position to get this financial or rewarding for the effort that I put into it. And I got it so ehmm and I've never asked him about like, that I needed like, kind of a pat on the shoulder for the job that have done so. So that was like, kind of amazing. I was kind of like, speechless when he said it to me. So Again, he saw what kind of job that I've been doing for the last couple of months so it was just like a bit of this. It was also fun because at the moment I feel kind of stressed or worried with all the work that I've done so to also get that kind of acknowledgement by him and also the management in organizations was much appreciated and kind of feeling that okay this is too much but then it was kind of nice

federica giuseppini 05:37

So you also felt valued in some ways?

Speaker 1 05:41

Definitely.. don't get me wrong I also felt values before but to get this kind of bonus also, kind of like ehmm also been been also Because I have always had the feeling that I've been valued by by my boss. But this was also a bonus that were by other leaders and from my own station should take that decision. So again, like also knowing that it's not only my boss that appreciate what I do, but also the other leaders in the organisation that is kind of like that's pretty good especially as a student. And also my time at Nordea because I also had like other tasks, other responsibilities that maybe a normal student, otherwise that this is also something where I feel valued that I get like normal full time. responsibilities, even though that I just feel trusted i can i can complete the tasks that are given to me. So, yeah, I think that's pretty cool.

federica giuseppini 07:20

Talking about leadership in general. How would you define the role of a leader, he's a leader to you.

Speaker 1 07:28

The leader is the one that has a strategic goal both of the bank and organisation but also the people. There's different levels here. But when it comes down on the strategic level on the team, I think that our leaders should have a clear overview of kind of the task as we need to have in the team. That's the line with the organisation but also the one.. the leaders also implement the different ideas from the team and the team members. For me is one that is now you saw the definitions that you wrote so should be very motivating but also give some free space for me as an employees to develop myself or shouldn't be like oh, we need to have one on one a week to make sure that you do the task. You'll be like you should have like a free space to to deliver the tasks that you have been given and of course if you need some some help, he should be close to you and can give you the support that you need to to complete your different tasks.

federica giuseppini 08:55

We can say in some ways that we should say that let's say the leader should always be focused on your personal developments as well as ?

Speaker 1 09:15

I would say my boss is the non bull shit ttype of guy and I appreciate because then you can be straight to each other without like hiding anything. So when I'm saying I'm missing some personal development or I need some tasks that kind of challenged me in a different way, he totally open for it and see how we can work with that because with in the same time, create value for the team, then he's totally open for them. Kind of in the process for me to explore what are the opportunities to do explore so very much about personal development. Giving space, and I say giving space that's also about making your own choices. I think that's very important

for an employee to feel valued and not having the feeling that you will be like oh I watch all the time. I think that is a very bad skill for for for a leader if she or he need to be like on top of things every day, every week. Also the way that you're communicating to each other as a certain kind of like no bull shit just talk about the things that we need to talk about and we can take action on that.

federica giuseppini 11:02

Should we say because my next question would have been if we talk about this ideal leader, like the perfect leader? How would collaboration look like? So in this sense, you can connect to the answer you just gave, I guess., the collaboration that you like, it's a collaboration that is honest, direct, in that sense.

Speaker 1 11:35

Exactly and also, the way that I work with my boss at the moment so also as you know, the KPI talk, what kind of goals to have 2020 and how are you going to accomplish that? For me, I have like four goals that I want to complete in 2020 we only have this talk at the start of the year because then we have agreed on a plan for how to compete these kind of goals and it's up to myself to actually accomplishment them So, again, he's helping me also setting the target framework but how I like reach the goal is up to myself if I need any help any times and you know he needs to escalate something or close to some people then he will be more than happy to help if I have a reason for it, of course. So again, like sending the framework is up to myself to take responsibility and ownership of the direction to get there where we want. But that's also come with the trust that my boss has our policy, because if he didn't have to trust me, then I think he would be more, okay, you need to be able to come from point A to point B, you need to do 1,2,3 different steps at the moment is just like, okay, you have to come from point A to point B, and then I have to figure out the direction myself. And also, a way that I work best and why I can't complete the most in that way I can be more most efficient.

federica giuseppini 13:53

That's pretty good. and if we talk about Nordea In general, how would you describe the leadership practices at the bank?

Speaker 1 14:06

I will say that it depends where you are in the organisation, in the headquarters the back office I would say we work with just like you have yearly KPI setting and you work from there. If you weren't an advisor or has something to do with customers. It's much more KPI focused almost a week, every month, you are compared to KPIs if you are reaching your sales goals or something like that. Not that much into that kind of leader I think it is not motivating at all. But that's also because I tried it on some of my old student jobs. The way that I see the leadership in general, I would say also getting very old, but I also think that it's very much aligned with values that we are trying to to work within Nordea you know, the ownership and so on. I like to say that I can see that on the different on the different levels of management level at the bank.

federica giuseppini 15:45

And so, is there something that you would change in this leadership practices if you could? like across the whole organization?

Speaker 1 15:54

I will, I will have to say something sometimes I don't think that everyone is aligned with the values, for example. Some organisation don't encourage people to speak up and speak their mind. I think that sad because I think that's where you get the most value from your employees that they have the opportunity and the free space to actually be able to stand up and speak their mind. This also goes back to some of the really old bank traditions, I will say that has been in the financial world in general, where some kind of people they have been here for many years and

when young people like me come in and say But I've learned to do this in my University or I think this is a better way they kind of won't listen to you because we have been this way for like 20 years.

federica giuseppini 17:16

Why do you think is that?

Speaker 1 17:19

Because they have been here for four more years and the way that they have been doing things support, and I can see that but I don't think they know how more efficient they can be maybe if we try to innovate the kind of business processes that we have had in the bank I also see that when we don't see re-new the leadership in the bank also see that we are kind of stuck in historic position and the organisation with older leaders that have been here for years is having a hard time innovate and doing things more efficient if I should look from higher up. So I have a hard time and one thing that I want to change again, we are not aligned in all the organisation of how we should do the daily business

federica giuseppini 18:34

So you perceive that you've received that on a daily basis?

Speaker 1 18:39

YYes

federica giuseppini 18:44

Interesting. And can you choose three attributes that our leader should have?

Speaker 1 19:11

Teamwork at first one.. a leader can be a leader in many ways, I think a leaders should be a part of the team and have good teamwork skills, because again, if a leader just told me what to do without giving me reason, or something then I will just sit there and say, but why? Be not motivated to to complete a task given to me. So teamwork, first of all, then passion for the things that a leader does. When our passion is to just like, reflect on your employees that you can see a leader being very passionate and Love to work that isn't a everyday life. I don't know how to say this but also be able to recognize when we need to celebrate, acknowledgement kind of you should be able to, to, to to open enough to give you a place that kind of appreciation that they maybe are required to have. Personally I don't ask my boss to give me acknowledgement he should be able to give it to me when he sees that I should then you should say so. But I don't know what to call it.

federica giuseppini 20:55

Okay, in some some sort of warning when it's just not even rewarding. Just aKnowledge. Yeah. Make sense. Okay, what are the three attributes that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 21:16

I think that is a very bad skill not to have as a leader. Things can be confused. That's just a very bad for the employee and he should not have the lack of overview Because then you will lose yourself I would say Last one but then again not being not be too much KPI but having maybe a bigger framework and goals in mind, like when you do things because you can have like that kind of military leadership thing where you are like really measuring everything that you do. And for me, my boss has kind of that saying to me that you don't care how much work you just want to have when you are being given a task that you deliver within the deadline. If you don't deliver, then you just like have alligned expectations to all the stakeholders that you're going to deliver to.

federica giuseppini 23:00

Okay, why do you think you pick these three?

Speaker 1 23:07

because I have seen that in the work that I've been going through Nordea, and that's something that I don't appreciate with a leader. Because, again, back in with the KBI thing, I think that I don't like that leadership role or put into that position that they have to lead like that. But I don't like I don't feel motivated and then I have to be here for X amount of time to do I don't think that's good for me.

federica giuseppini 23:55

And can you describe a situation like a specific again, a specific situation where you experience very good leadership?

Speaker 1 24:06

Yeah. I have a situation where another organisation leader wrote to me, my boss and my organisation leader that I have been doing tasks wrong really like criticizing me and the work that I've been doing. First of all, he told me some things that we have been setting up just in conflicts. So that was one thing. But my boss's reply was then he told him my back and this is not alright do and I think that he thinks that I have done the task that was put on the table. Again, this like he was like having my back There was like kind of no questions that maybe the guy that wrote to me maybe was right. So I think that was that was very nice experience for me.

federica giuseppini 25:16

Why?

Speaker 1 25:21

First of all, when some someone in the bank or an organisational leader criticizes your work, I think that's first of all very bad experience for an employee. Also, the situation was directly wrote to me my boss, and an organisational Leader without alligning with me first. Because if he, if he had done that, he wouldn't have send that email. So again, then my boss trust so much, that of course, he In my bag when someone criticized me in that way, that also made me feel appreciated as an employee in his team And then also encouraged me to kind of continue the work that I'm doing because again, I know when I'm doing my mind, I'm working then I have the full support from my boss.

federica giuseppini 26:26

That's really nice. Can you describe me of a situation where you've experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 26:38

That is in one of my former jobs, where I worked in customer service. Then for maybe two months, I didn't have the best KPI numbers in sales and my former manager took me through a conversation about the sales numbers, and she was kind of mad that I haven't performed normally I am on top and so on. So, being in the bottom for two months were a rare side but yeah, both just a way of saying it was not. Alright, I'll say it was kind of, okay. are you in this or not? this kind of, there's 10s of thousands of other young people that want to get a job. So if you don't perform then we can find another you. Basically that comment is just over my mind of what you could say to an employee, but also when I argue, because most that I've been talking to I'm not that person. That kind of just like, pushes through with customer sales. Because if they don't have a need for the product that I'm going to serve them, then it's just a bad customer experience. And customer experience has also been a cornerstone in what we're doing in Nordea when I kind of argument, okay, but that's not a customer experience. You just told Yeah, but you have KPIs you need to attend to. Then again, you are not aligned with the overall strategy and so on. So, I just think that I hit the wall there with that, former manager. She was

also let go some months after, because it was not only me, she had like that attitude Again, so I also see that some higher up managers saw that If that was not in the best fit of the formal team I was working with.

federica giuseppini 29:05

So if you were in her shoes what would have you done?

Speaker 1 29:13

I would have not be that aggressive aahah that I would fire people like that. If I don't perform in kind of short period where are my numbers were down I would just taking the conversaiton like. Okay Martin normally you are at the top of the table well what have changed in the past few months. So again I would take the open dialogue, identify what she could have done to help me get up to the top of the table again.. And kind of motivate me in the right way and not by by telling me that I could get fired.. the boss that over took that job or position said Yeah, let's see what we can do to help you. Two months after she wa fired and the new boss there took that approach and took that kind of decision again, my numbers went straight up again. So I can take to be criticized, no problem at all. This just have to be constructed. Because if I don't know what to do about it, then I can just sit there with my arms crossed and thinking yeah if you don't fire me in 1 month then I'll probably look for something else. So the total way of doing things for not a rag but again, take dialogue, looking at things where she could help to, to help me get back in the game.

federica giuseppini 31:20

So if you were a leader, how would you motivate your employees?

Speaker 1 31:30

Well first of all, I think that my boss is also really good at is to talk about all the good things that we're doing. And the kind of successes that we have been doing in the team because we are in the focus right now in the bank, and we are working a lot of us but also just feel the appreciation not only for my leader but the whole bank is is very much appreciated for me because then I also feel motivated as an employee have kind of when we do good things, I will definitely talk a lot about them. Again like be open minded but also have a direction for the team but I will definitely also that my employees have a say in kind of the overall framework and the direction for the team. Because if they are not like I'm saying... implemented in things that we do, then they are not feeling encouraged and listened to and motivated for the things that we want to do. Of course, they also need to be kind of some, some framework that that people Have a goal for the next half year for the next year and we kind of have to compete with that too, to be able to deliver some value for the organisation. So some, some kind of whole leadership and final conclusion needs to come from the manager, but yeah open minded, encourage people to take ownership. And just be very open about the communication and be helpful if they're someone that kind of leads that in my team.

federica giuseppini 33:40

And you talked a lot about, you know, this KPIs way of Yeah, understanding the performance in that sense. So how do you how would you as a leader, evaluate performance just evaluate your employees?

Speaker 1 34:00

First of all see if we have been successful with our whole strategical because if we have done better I know that my employees have done to be able to deliver on that. And if we don't have to track it down and see how far we have, we are come with the kind of goals but again also coming back to the yearly setting of goals that the employee go through at Nordea, of course also evaluate on that. Because for me as a leader is not only the different strategic goals and tasks on the job, you also need to have kind of personal development for yourself, because

otherwise, I don't think that any employee will be motivated to do the things that they are doing if they don't show some kind of personal development or suggesting that one of my KPIs is not related to a specific task. It's just a skill set that I need to develop.

federica giuseppini 35:33

Do you set up these KPIs together with your manager?

Speaker 1 35:37

I just like write down like five guys that I want to focus on. And then we have a conversation on that because of course he also has a take on it. Maybe he also has something he wants to to to to add or somethin glike that. I Remember that In the start of end of 2019, when we were supposed to set the goals I put in that I want to get promoted. And then he just called me up and laughing ahah in a good way, because he's opinion on that is that is not a KPI in sales to be promoted. It should be an effect of the faith that you have been doing, what your goals, that should be like a reward for that you have been successful with your own goals. And I totally agree with that, because I know that some moder organisation has a KPI they want to get promoted, but I totally follow the organisation that they should be rewarded for the goals that you have been doing for the year or years. Look back. so yeag this is a conversation discussion that I have with my boss, but mostly that are setting the goals. Of course, I think if you were not agreeing in goals that I was setting, then I think he would say a lot more. But I think my boss and me are really really aligned and of course we also have one on ones weekly, or something like that, but he just like shows tasks that I'm currently doing. So also, my boss is not working at the danish office he is sitting in sweden so comes on all the way or we talk from Skype. So he's not seeing a lot of do every day you saw me from other People and so having kind of the bi-weekly status meetings, just making it easier to set goals because he of course know what I'm good at and where I can develop myself where he can kind of use my skill set to, to bring a lot of value for the team and the organisation.

federica giuseppini 38:26

That's pretty nice. It must be hard. I mean, not hard, but it's never the same by being a leader next to you, that you can just, you know, interact easily with anyone that you can only speak to. I mean, mainly on Skype, right? Because I mean, I guess that relationship with your boss is also social in some ways. So it's nice to share other things like a coffee break or something once in a while.

Speaker 1 38:51

Yeah sometimes we just to take coffee over Skype, you know, About, yeah, you can also be some status on some things. But normally when I have one, two ones with my boss is almost an hour time where we use like the first 15 minutes to just talk about private lives, what he has been up to what I've been up to, or also think that is a way for him to hear if I'm all right, if I'm kind of stressed, because he knows that some other employees have pressure at the moment, have been for for a couple months. So, of course, he also wants to help us keeping that kind of work life balance, so we're not burning the candles in both ends because of course he wants to have us for a long time and not having us gone through with stress and so on, but it's different was a chance for me when I got a boss call. Because I have always been used to having a boss sitting next to me. And she was always able to see what kind of work that I've been doing thouruhg today and so on and now is only on on the beatings that we have to get through Skype or the conversations that we have, like, my my leadercan get a feeling of what I've been doing and so on. And that took some time to, to be used to. but now I have been used to. It works totally fine. We are international company so That's just the way that we should work. And also a new way of working compared to maybe older the times.

federica giuseppini 40:58

It sounds like you're thinking A person that needs both a little bit of space to do yourself. So it's better maybe for you to have in some way so if you're later that it's a little bit further, like if you don't feel like it's just checking maybe on you every day

Speaker 1 41:14

yeah exactly and also again, like that my my boss is kind of he's trusting me. And the way I don't have the feeling that he's too like he's also just there task that he did the most that you just know now, of course, we we need to know each other before he did that and so on. But that's just the way that we are working at the moment. So that is the way that I'm feeling motivated.

federica giuseppini 41:57

That sounds good. A couple more things. Because before we before let you go. So since this is a study of generations, I feel like, I hope it's okay if I asked you how old you are?

Speaker 1 42:10

I am 28

federica giuseppini 42:11

Nice. And also, two more things, I'm gonna send you a second survey, and it's gonna it's gonna be as fast as the first. So it goes a little bit more. It goes a little bit more in, like details, what you think about, you know, maybe experienced people at the bank, like you told me about your experiences of, you know, them being a little bit more, not willing to change. And when new people bring to the table, let's put it that way. So I'm going to send this to you now on LinkedIn. And while I do this, I'm going to ask you the last question, which is, if you think, of course, is there something I didn't ask you that you really wanted to share about leadership and also if there's something that you yourself are curious to know about leadership

Speaker 1 43:07

I would like to say that inside Nordea really acknowledge people for talent for leadership that way that I think, instead of like hiring externally every time there's a management position is quite good at looking internally to see Okay, do we have some people that first of all deserve to have a chance to be a leader and also that we can we'll see the best people that have kind of a talent to be a leader but haven't tried it yet. So like, kind of pick and choose inside Nordea. I will like that because we're going to have a plan to be a leader in the position where I work, I can be more than challenge without being a leader. But that is something I wanted to say that is good in Nordea.

federica giuseppini 44:20

Do you think it's good? Do you think it's good for the organization itself? Or do you think it's good for the people?

Speaker 1 44:28

I think it's good for the people in a way that I think we are good at keeping talents in the bank and they are not like, encouraged to look externally every time they want a challenge. Look for for new challenges. So sometimes, that also means that we can keep the momentum that we have in the bank, because we are good at picking picking the right people for the management positions. Of course we can also choose wrong. That's just how it is. But mostly good at picking the right people. And for the people you know, then you know, because we have the trend but we are beaten getting people inside Nordea to be promoted to a leader role. Then you also can see that, that okay, you have the dream of becoming a manager leader in the future then I just know that if I deliver on what I have to do on my table and definitely be put in the position where I have the chance to be a leader in the future so I think that is very nice.

federica giuseppini 45:51

okay. Thank you so much for participating. I know I'm in your stress of worrying. So thank you for taking the time. It's really, really nice. And I send you the second survey and I hope Yeah, I mean as you can see

9.1.8 Interview with Martina

Thu, 6/4 11:28AM • 36:07

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

leader, feel, leadership, employees, working, people, goals, motivate, experience, team, younger, nice, bank, generation, focusing, overstepping, talk, important, aligned, sense

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:04

All right. So I'm gonna ask you how do you remember your first day at work?

Speaker 1 00:10

Hey, yes. lol.

federica giuseppini 00:13

Yeah. Can you tell me a little bit about it?

Speaker 1 00:17

Yes. Well, it was in the start of September. And so I remember my co-worker, which also works in my team. She was the one helping me get through the first day or the first days. And she just showed me around showing where the coffee room is and where the lunch areas and helped me with the computer and everything. But yeah, and helped me also with the technical issues because there's always technical issues I learned at Nordea and just helping me Say hi to everyone. That I should meet. And yeah. And in the first days was just getting into it and getting to know people and more, instead of just focusing on what that was supposed to do, so I didn't, I didn't do as many tasks, per se was more about getting into it.

federica giuseppini 01:21

And when you got the job, what were you looking forward the most and what were you hearing?

Speaker 1 01:28

Like, well, I was looking forward, like doing in the work, just

federica giuseppini 01:31

starting the new position at the bank..

Speaker 1 01:34

Yeah well I have been working in a startup before coming into nordia, so I didn't actually know what to expect because I had always been working in like a smaller business was where I knew everyone and I could talk to everyone. Whereas now was like a big corporation where you didn't know even the one sitting next to you Sometimes. So and also, I've never seen myself as a bank type of girl. And I didn't really know how much technical stuff there was behind Nordea. So I didn't really know what to expect. so surprised and above the way how interesting was

because I thought it was going to be a lot of bank boring things. And, yeah, I had expected I guess the more boring job that I that I experienced that it is so

federica giuseppini 02:40

it was good. How does a normal day at the office looks like

Speaker 1 02:46

it's very different since I'm working in like a team where you sort of support everyone in every part of the technologies that basically he felt can look very different. And that is We come in around nine o'clock in the morning, and then I grab a coffee. And then we have a morning meeting where we tell the other ones about what we're working on and how far we've come and like a status update. And then I feel like there's most efficient in the hours before lunch, and then after that sort of people are getting more distance, maybe people picking up children's on kindergarten, and so forth. So I guess most of the work done before lunch, to be honest.

federica giuseppini 03:41

Okay. But you said it's also maybe because of the orders.

Speaker 1 03:46

Yes. Because one of the challenges I think at Nordea is that you are dependent on and at least in my team, we're very dependent on people entering that happens like the hours from where for when you send the mail to get the answers like that period is longer after lunch. Yeah. So yeah

federica giuseppini 04:12

make sense. Okay. And can you tell me a time where you felt most appreciated and rewarded by one of your leaders? It doesn't necessarily have to be Nordea because

Speaker 1 04:24

I mean, it's always nice to be like praise to it's like a name like when your leader like mentioned you like saying my team does this in front of your colleagues are simply going to have a team meeting and you've done something you're proud of, and then your leader comments on that. For example, in or maybe in my previous job when I had reached the or gotten the highest above the target segments, and on the monthly meeting I was mentioned. So I was like, I'm not like usually the one, the one that like, likes to be the center of attention, like in a big meeting, but it's always nice to hear that you appreciated. So maybe in that setting. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 05:16

And can you remember any situation at work where your age played a role?

Speaker 1 05:25

In Nordea or in general?

federica giuseppini 05:27

General.

Speaker 1 05:29

I was when I was younger, I worked as a journalist. And in the newspaper wasn't like a huge newspaper, so we had to cover different subjects, even though my type of area was maybe more cultural focused. And so in times where I would send out, like more political related cases and talk to like maybe men in their 50s I could very much experience that they need to look down at me and look like can you write about this? And so that's maybe that's the strongest experience. I've noticed. But yeah, nothing at Nordea I think, not yet.

federica giuseppini 06:21

to when we talk a little bit more about general the idea of leadership, right. So how would you define the role of a leader?

Speaker 1 06:30

I think that he's a he or her or he or she should be a person to lead the way that you can ask for support when needed. And also someone who can inspire you and not necessarily one you can hide behind if Do something wrong, but if I feel like you need to take responsibility if you're a leader and you are In the end the responsible for your team. And maybe, also for me communication is very important. So I think the leader has to be like the gathering point where if you ask the leader he should he or she should know what to say. And if you have questions, you should get an answer from him or her.

federica giuseppini 07:27

No. Nice. And if we like if we can Imagine this like ideal leader. Right? How would communication and collaboration look like with this ideal leader?

Speaker 1 07:45

Yeah, for me, it's especially important that everyone has the same expectations. There are aligned so everyone knows what they union, everyone in the room has the same idea of what you're going to do and what the other ones expect. Because if you're like if you have people in your team have different goals and different ideas of what the final project is, or the final result is, I think it's very difficult to work efficiently. So that's the most important part, that everything is aligned that everyone is on the same page.

federica giuseppini 08:36

And talking about Nordea's values, so it's collaboration corage, ownership and passion, right? What do they mean to you?

Speaker 1 08:49

The value is, I mean, I can relate to, to all of them in certain ways, but it's not something I think about every day. Like, personally, I think I mean, it's a nice thing to have of course, and we constantly get reminded of them, but it's not something I use in my everyday. To be honest, I know that's probably my boss wants to ear ahah.

federica giuseppini 09:22

Makes sense. I mean, the values are always useful because it's about the culture right? Now, you're gonna set up in the organization, but I don't believe that everyone thinks about all the values every day before they take any action now. And like if we talk about leadership practices at Nordea, how would you describe them?

Speaker 1 09:44

Like the leader?

federica giuseppini 09:46

Yeah, whatever, like did their approach to their leadership style? Yeah.

Speaker 1 09:52

Well, I haven't.. I had like two people that I can call my leaders C. You know him and T. And I don't know of others leadership that we are except for well P., when he speaks to everyone. But I feel like there is bit more formal than I've been used to. Before. That makes sense, since this is a big corporation instead of like a small size. And for example, when I worked in the startup, I felt like my leader there, he was very charismatic. And I think also that is very important for startups, of course, because you have to sell the product and everything. And that seems to be less important. Nor the maybe it's maybe more. I don't know, I'm not totally sure. But I feel like

maybe skills Sometimes play a bigger role in Nordea rather than the people leaders are like, people, people of people, you know. Yeah. I mean, I think also, I don't think you can make it a stereotype out of the leaders in nordia. Because I feel like it's very subjective. And the type of leadership they they do.

federica giuseppini 11:30

I mean, you can get a sense by I mean, you know, that leaders are supposed to act in a certain way, because they kind of train them in some ways, you know, internally. So maybe you get a sense of like, how, you know, hierarchical structure plays a role or how strict they have to be on certain things. Or, I don't know, but like you said, it's very formal, for instance, Okay, and what would you change about this?

Speaker 1 12:04

I don't Really know, I've been on a project now, but it's about gender diversity. So for sure if I could choose, I would of course get more women into leadership positions maybe. And, and also like, it seems after looking into them to numbers, I feel like a lot of leaders are definitely named 50 years plus or last 50 or so little employee and up. So maybe get some fresh mind. You let me be cool. What, um, I don't know too much to say much more about that.

federica giuseppini 12:46

it makes sense. It could be yours. I mean, generally, you know, you say a maybe younger leaders can bring something, you know, yeah. How would you How would you think it would look if there were all of the sudden there were like, half females and half you know, Like, whole mix ages?

Speaker 1 13:03

I definitely feel like I don't know for sure either. But I feel like women are looked at as more creative. So maybe more traits wishes. And with younger minds in relationship growth, I definitely feel like in these times where we tried to focus on agile, I guess I would be much easier if you had like spokespersons, or later in his team that really believed in the agile way of working because I feel like also younger people are more adaptable to to make that change. I feel like if you if you've been in the bank for 30 years, you're more likely to say no, that's not a good solution. Let's just continue as usual. needed to think to change

federica giuseppini 14:00

Okay, interesting. And if you could choose three adjectives that a leader should have, which one would that be? Okay, so three attributes.

Speaker 1 14:18

honest, encouraging, and empowering. I think.

federica giuseppini 14:33

Okay. And which one are three that a leader should never ever should never be?

Speaker 1 14:43

Hmmm that's the hard one. Maybe I mean should never be rude. Can you say that help hold the grudge Like that's your

federica giuseppini 15:19

yeah so maybe I know what you mean..

Speaker 1 15:28

like Angry for a long period

federica giuseppini 15:31

night you know you do something wrong and they just don't let it go.

Speaker 1 15:34

Yeah

federica giuseppini 15:36

let's keep it like this.

Speaker 1 15:45

and over when you when you pull... mm when someone tries to say something but you don't just go over that when we're just overstepping.

federica giuseppini 16:05

overstepping or overruling.

Speaker 1 16:07

Yeah, okay, yeah.

federica giuseppini 16:09

Why do you think those are really bad?

Speaker 1 16:13

Why? Because I feel like if people are rude to me, I just don't want to. First of all, I don't want to talk to that person. And then also I would imagine if we have a rude leader, I would not look forward to go to work that way, and overstepping I feel like then I would not have a motivation to share my ideas if I knew that they wouldn't be taken seriously. And for me, it's very important to feel like safe and able to share my opinions. And little Yeah, and holding a grudge. crumbing same effect, you would just be more careful with What you said, If you knew that everything you did or it said would be hold against you, for a long period of time make sense?

federica giuseppini 17:08

Do you think that then you're saying that this kind of reflects on performance in the sense it affects it? Does it affect performance? In some ways?

Speaker 1 17:21

I feel like it affects the potential because the Yes, you don't get the potential out, get something that makes you hold back, which you want to or what you could have delivered.

federica giuseppini 17:40

I can do can you describe a situation where you have experienced good leadership anywhere?

Speaker 1 17:47

Mhmm. Yes, I mean, when I was in, going to be from any Working experience, When I was I was working in the newspaper. And, and I was pretty young and I was around 16-17 maybe. So it's an experience and I'm sure I wasn't too confident that we can just walk up to my boss and be like, you need to tell me this what I'm going to do like, Yeah, so the communication was for sure not like, fully aligned about what the requirements were. So and when you have like an experienced employee, that maybe doesn't have the courage to, to make sure that the the requirements or the vision for the for the project is clear, you should, you should make sure that they feel comfortable about sharing what they think and feel confident enough to walk up there and get the right result?

federica giuseppini 19:05

So this is when you have experienced, like, no good leadership.

Speaker 1 19:12

Also. Yes. I mean, I haven't had like a super bad experience with leadership. They mean in terms of the project or just in general, in general.

federica giuseppini 19:27

So like, for instance, if you saw like you have experienced to see a leader that in like a specific situation you were very, like, positively shocked by an action that they took they, you know, maybe you didn't think about that it was so beneficial for the team or I know it's hard because we we didn't have that much experience yet. I mean, I mean, we have two years versus You know, when I talk to people that have like 40 years of experience and they still have troubles coming up with an example.

Speaker 1 20:06

Yeah.

federica giuseppini 20:09

But it's just but also like a school that could be even a teacher because somehow they are leaders.

Speaker 1 20:14

I didn't happen to me. But I remember Oh, we had, our old CEO. at a startup, he was not my team leader, but like, it's also a leader in terms of being like a CEO. He followed small team, you can easily see who isn't like the target. And he would very often point out in front of everyone if someone didn't do that, and for me, yeah, I would be like, no, never wraking, if that was me. So that's maybe yes. Or that is for sure. bad Leadership. I think

federica giuseppini 20:56

do you think that like I don't know. I mean, that's, that's pretty harsh. But do you think that motivates the people somehow? Like, do you think it can be beneficial at some point?

Speaker 1 21:12

I mean, I think there for sure is a difference in different industries. For example, in I don't know, maybe in some, some sectors in terms of sales, if you have like the though bulldogs who just wants to sell, sell, sell, as maybe, less motivating for someone. And if some what like, up and down and if it's you one month and if it's you and other month, but if it's always the same person, and I will say in most industries, I don't think that's very beneficial for anyone should be like pointed out and say that you didn't do your job well this month in yeah then it's your fault.

federica giuseppini 22:02

Yeah. Okay, so we talked about kind of, you know, bad leadership experiences, right? ish. mistaken, we can say, do you have any? Like I said before, like, can you? I don't know, maybe maybe somehow we answered already but so do you have a situation where you've experienced like the perfect kind of leadership. If you have experienced that, like, a very good

Speaker 1 22:32

Very good ehmm.. Yeah, we actually say my current boss. He's very, he's very good at asking us what we are interested in. Then he tried to and help us pick tasks He thinks can can help us grow. And at the same time, like challenges, not only the things we want to do, but also the thing he he thinks we would be able to do and benefit from. And I think that's very important. of the quality is better leadership and to help your employees grow that way. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 23:26

Very nice. And how does your leader assess your performance?

Speaker 1 23:32

How does he..?

federica giuseppini 23:36

assess?

Speaker 1 23:37

Oh, yeah, yep. And well, we have no idea we have these quarterly meeting to discuss where we discussed the tasks and so that's okay. We and also we can also come to him and discuss discuss the goals. If we if we feel like that

federica giuseppini 24:01

did you have one yet?

Speaker 1 24:04

Yeah. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 24:05

And do you think that reflects reality, kind of?

Speaker 1 24:14

Yeah. I mean, in a way in depends on what person you are, I guess. Some have weekly goals. Some have yearly goals that I think it's a good enough way for. Yes.

federica giuseppini 24:32

Yeah. Because it works if I'm not mistaken in your works like, you know, they they take kind of the feedback from the people you've worked with and then now, you know talk about that. Okay. And so far that has been working, you think? Yes. Okay. And is there something you would change about it?

Speaker 1 24:54

Not really, I mean, we have we have a one one to one conversation every month. So I feel like If there's anything you worried about, in terms of the goals, and if you already reached it after three months, I don't know what life would like if you did that you can always say that I've accomplished this already. Can we just adjust it? So I think it's a flexible way actually.

federica giuseppini 25:22

That's really good. And if you were a leader How would you evaluate your employees?

Speaker 1 25:35

First of all, we'd be very interested in seeing how satisfy they were with what they were working on. And, and also, I would probably look at the goals that they have set their consult hear their own evaluation. But also I think you also need some, some standards or like some goal like scopes. And it also depends on what you're working on. I mean, if if you're, if your job is about making a purchase of process more efficient, you should look at the numbers and same with like, if you are a salesperson, you should, to some level be judged on how how much you sold, I guess

federica giuseppini 26:37

so it's much job specific. But would you so would you would you consider performance as you know, just targets them because we've been talking about that. So would it be like Target around that as in like, you've reached your own goals and the company's goals? Kind of?

Speaker 1 26:56

Yeah, okay. Yeah. Okay.

federica giuseppini 27:00

And how would you motivate...

Speaker 1 27:04

that not only like focusing on numbers, I feel like that's not a good way you can just measure on numbers.

federica giuseppini 27:13

So what what else?

Speaker 1 27:15

Like I said like, had a socket like also like ehmm I don't know how to describe it..

federica giuseppini 27:26

because you thought that myself goals so maybe self accomplishment?

Speaker 1 27:30

Yeah, yeah.

federica giuseppini 27:32

So but still so it will still be focused on the individual personal perception. in some ways okay.

Speaker 1 27:40

Yeah.

federica giuseppini 27:41

Interesting and so if you were a leader How would you motivate your employees?

Speaker 1 27:50

Just asking if they feel challenged, know what they're doing and making sure that they they are working with something they find into Sing something they are for 10 months, like that the task itself can motivate them instead of if the leader having to do it like, I don't want, I would never want to be like a leader that has to put much effort into like, everyday have a speech of you can do you can do it. I think everyone should be working with something that is motivating itself. So, so insurance making sure that they are comfortable with that. And yeah, so how we just don't need that motivational speech every day.

federica giuseppini 28:40

So then how would you do that?

Speaker 1 28:43

Just having one to one or discussing like, trying to promote? Maybe talking to if you have a big office like at Nordea there's so much going on that you don't even know about.. promoting Your employees to like have a chat around the office and seeing what was going on and and get encouraged to get involved in projects, they finally would end up in naturally. Maybe. Okay.

federica giuseppini 29:21

And what do you think when we talk about, you know, maybe younger generations, right? What do you think is the best attribute that young generation bring to the leadership table?

Speaker 1 29:33

I think they're much more open minded, and may be more adaptable to change. And especially being adaptable to change. I think it's in the work today. There's a lot of things happening, they will change most industries. And I think that's a benefit of younger generation is that we're more got trouble coming? Yeah,

federica giuseppini 30:04

yeah. But do you think that's gonna change in the sense that maybe also the order the older employees, not the bank, they were the same when they started, right. So how, how would you think that the generation will keep up this, like, while going up in the organizational structure, in the sense, like if you get so much experience, and then sometimes you get stuck into this way of thinking, right? Mm hmm. So how would you think that the new generation would deal with this?

Speaker 1 30:36

with the older generation?

federica giuseppini 30:39

we're like, if you're, if we're seeing the younger generations are open minded, right? How do you not know that the old generations were also open minded when they just started their adult? And you know, how maybe maybe that changed with experience or?

Speaker 1 30:56

Yeah, but I also feel like the younger generation Now, the development of new technology, for example, that's an element that wasn't existing with the older generation, lifting up the same degrees now. And so I think that we're investing way you just have to be more open minded because things are happening much faster now than before. And of course, I can't totally sure about it

federica giuseppini 31:33

No, no, of course I'm just challenging you a little. But at first and so if you think of Nordea. So imagine if young generation imagine like in maybe 10 years when our generation is the next leader, you know, the next two, maybe two levels of leadership at the bank, something like this. How would it look like how different Would it be?

Speaker 1 32:02

is not there in 10 years.

federica giuseppini 32:07

Yeah, in 10 years

Speaker 1 32:08

Hmm it's hard to say.

federica giuseppini 32:15

But if you think for instance of your team, you know,

Speaker 1 32:20

Yeah, I will, I will be. I'll be 33 years old then. A lot of things could happen in 10 years with technology and how even the bank works. But I think that i think i hope that the ones sitting in leadership chair is is willing to change the format of the bank. And enough like, like holding tight on what they are familiar with, I mean, I, I'm not sure that we can say that that was going to happen because for so many years, it's always been an older man sitting in that chair. So I'm not sure that that will change.

federica giuseppini 33:20

Yeah, especially, you know, you know, you know, environment like the bank because you, you have to build trust because banks are about trust with customers, right? And it's just, it's hard to adapt with change and it's hard to embrace it, I guess. That's why I wonder if the new generation is going to bring something much more radical to their, to the industry. I don't know. It's gonna be interesting. But yeah, but let's, let's keep it short. I'm gonna ask you some background info and then we are good to go. So how old are you is at 23 I think?

Speaker 1 33:59

Yeah, yeah. I'm turning 23 I'm 22 naturally.

federica giuseppini 34:04

And you said you're studying development like innovation and development?

Speaker 1 34:10

Yeah. Management of innovation and business development on my first year.

federica giuseppini 34:15

Nice. And what's the what's your position in the organization?

Speaker 1 34:20

What am I doing? Nope. Yeah, I'm working in technology and mainly focusing on supporting communication.

federica giuseppini 34:30

Perfect. And where are you from?

Speaker 1 34:33

Norway.

federica giuseppini 34:34

nice. And is there something you think I should have asked about leadership? Because it's, it's so hard to try to get like all the information about leadership because it's so subjective. And people think some things are super important when some people don't even like, you know, even mentioned it.

Speaker 1 34:57

I mean, maybe at Interesting question. I feel like different teams in Nordea could use different leaders. And I think that that's also the case without knowing for sure what type of leaders because well, the automation team has, with for example, just looking at my team, with T, I feel like they've, they've made a good choice with having a younger leader there. I feel he is very much on the same page as us and very many things also, because he's been a student there himself. Yeah. And so I feel like they've at least been doing a good job with finding a leader there. So hopefully, that also is the same in other parts that they have, like a different like, like a person type that fits with the rest of the team.

federica giuseppini 35:53

That's really nice. All right, and I'm gonna send you a second survey. Just super quick probably saved like, three minutes. And then yeah and then you're good to go. I'm gonna stop recording

9.1.9 Interview with Jorgen

Thu, 6/4 11:23AM • 50:48

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

tasks, people, leader, instance, work, understand, suddenly, feel, expected, collaboration, type, arrogant, office, bit, sense, employees, power bi, important, team, confident

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:03

So I'm gonna ask you just a very introductory question. Do you remember your first day of work?

Speaker 1 00:11

Yeah.

federica giuseppini 00:12

Can you tell me a little bit about it?

Speaker 1 00:16

I met you and Jamal, in well in the hole, and we had to have a pictures taken. And there was a bunch of introductory information where how people sit in the office where we are located. And we were shown the building. And then basically, we, he. We looked at the work the other people were doing, we didn't have laptops ourselves that we could work on. And we had to get accesses and accounts created so we had to make calls to it. Service, stuff like that.

federica giuseppini 01:03

Okay. And when you got offered the position, what were you looking for? Were you looking forward?

Speaker 1 01:19

Not sure I was really looking for anything that specific. I just wanted something new. I had just finished working at a different job, a different company. And well wasn't too happy there. It wasn't very challenging. So that was the main thing that was a job that would be more challenging to develop my own skills and interests, and not just do busy work where you answer emails or whatever, but Do some real work.

federica giuseppini 02:04

And do you feel like you have achieved that?

Speaker 1 02:12

Yeah, partially,

federica giuseppini 02:14

yeah. Most mostly That's right. Maybe,

Speaker 1 02:19

yeah, it comes in for me at least it comes in waves also because my skills is a bit more it heavy. And so sometimes it's, it's been a bit more difficult finding projects suitable to that, for instance, if, if it's programming or whatever, you can't just reach out to anyone. And they'll understand or need someone who can, I don't know write Python or SQL, R studio and stuff like that. So that can be a bit challenging sometimes. And also, just from the way we Work. Power BI hasn't been used that much. We're using it a lot more now. Which is good for me because now I get to do a

bunch of Power BI. But I didn't like.. last year for instance, because sure you remember it was always just Excel and pivot tables and stuff like that.

federica giuseppini 03:25

Yeah, I guess mainly. And was there something you were afraid of? Before starting?

Speaker 1 03:34

Sorry. Afraid?

federica giuseppini 03:36

Yeah. Something that you were afraid of?

Speaker 1 03:40

No, Like what? Like type of task or?

federica giuseppini 03:44

maybe even colleagues or like, you know, complex organization or type of tasks or

Speaker 1 03:50

Yeah you're very scary.

federica giuseppini 03:52

Yeah. Yeah, I get that. I get that quite a lot.

Speaker 1 03:57

ferocious, little Italian.

federica giuseppini 04:02

I get them all right. And But no,

Speaker 1 04:05

no no I'm I'm always very open to challenges and new things. It's it's I enjoy it being presented with something like now that Tristan is my manager. If he comes in, assess, I'd really like you to do this but I know you haven't done it before. Is it something you'd be interested you'd like to try then I'm I'm always happy to try even if I don't know if I can do it.

federica giuseppini 04:35

that's good. Can you tell me about a time that you felt appreciated or rewarded by one of your leaders?

Speaker 1 04:46

Well Tristan is very good at communicating satisfaction like that he's happy with the work being done and I am Also working for some other other leaders at Nordea and they've also been very happy and we have weekly meetings and they usually tell us I don't know if you have talked with him at all or no who's employed. Now, I just know that you've contacted tristin to ask if you could talk to a students. But one of the new guys is Tobias. And we've been working together a lot on various projects and on those projects, we, they always tell us that we're doing a good job. So pretty good at that. And actually, more than I expected. I expected just silent bosses in suits, but they're very enthusiastic, actually, most of the time promising us cocktails even

federica giuseppini 05:57

that's good and Good. And can you remember any situation at work where your age played a role?

Speaker 1 06:12

No, no.

federica giuseppini 06:16

no, that's good. Very good. I'm going a little bit more talking broader about leadership. How would you define the role of a leader?

Speaker 1 06:32

In a team like this the way it is, it's, well, it depends on the team. If there's a lot of collaboration, it's about cohesion. You know, you move and work as one unit. So everybody knows what each other is doing. There's no surprises or confusion. And then of course, it's, it's, well, it's been essential for the way we work in our team, you know, finding different projects that are suitable to our skills and what we're supposed to be doing the type of service, we're supposed to provide at Nordea you know, so making things fit is very essential as well. So it's actually appropriate what we're doing. So we don't sit and think we shouldn't really be doing this type of work, but now we're forced to, it's important to avoid those situations.

federica giuseppini 07:43

So, so far, you talked about collaboration and a good match between your skills and the tasks given to you. Yeah, because I mean if if, if you have a we if we just use me for it, Can program or whatever. And I've been doing doing a lot of automation tasks. For instance, with the Power BI, so setting up data sources that we can just click Update instead of having to do all the process the data manually. So I mean, with those skills, it doesn't make sense that suddenly I'm working on a PowerPoint, for instance, Right? Yeah. So it's just, I know that's an extreme example, but hopefully few places have programmers that do a PowerPoint up just saying it's, it's too good to be suitable to the type of talent or employees you have. If and finding Yeah, suitable tasks for that also push them so they also keep developing keep improving especially meaningful. We are all very young and fresh in our careers, right. So we, we have a lot to learn. And it's important that a leader pushes that so suddenly we're not 30 and we still haven't learned anything. So you said that, let's say that maybe this past few months, you got more, you know, this good fit with the tasks you were given. Let's say. So,

Speaker 1 09:35

yeah, okay. It was improved when Tristan became manager.

federica giuseppini 09:41

Why do you think that happened?

Speaker 1 09:49

I think Well, honestly my previous boss was just I mean, you know, God was a bad fit for our students. She didn't, I felt like at least she didn't really understand. For instance with me, I had to keep explaining her what even programming basically was and what I could do. She never really understood how I could automate things. So she could never really find me those type of tasks. That was very difficult for her because she couldn't communicate to other people what I could do. So there was a bunch of a bunch of missed opportunities, because she can't explain. Well, he can do so and so in Power BI or Python then make things go quicker and automated. She couldn't really explain that to the people. So she was a bad fit. And also she was very rigid in the approach to how to our team structure for instance, when you get in the office and how you coordinate Your days. I remember she was just because we're students and sometimes it's it's important, we can be flexible and shift our days around if needed. She didn't like that which made it more difficult as well. So we're versus like planning, planning our calendar a month in advance, and she expected that to sort of be set in stone almost. Which was also it's just a bad fit because sometimes if I had a slump, like I finished my work during week one, for instance, I finished my tasks. And I was supposed to go into the office tomorrow or whenever, Monday and

it was Friday, and I hadn't really received anything else to do then I will I move my Monday to maybe Wednesday to just give it a few more days. So, work could come into my inbox right? And she was always she never liked that. T. doesn't mind at all, which makes it so much easier for us because she has experienced being a student. I mean, very recently he was a student. We we replaced him after all. So he understands that if you need to move things around, move it around. I mean, just show it in your calendar, but I'm not gonna make a thing out of it that you suddenly moved from Monday to Wednesday because you didn't. You weren't sure you would have enough work to do on Monday. He understands that which has improved things a lot, at least for me because I was also very unhappy with my previous leader.

federica giuseppini 13:01

Do you feel like your previous leader? Do you think her approach got in the way of your work your performance you were at war? Just your you know, yourself there?

Speaker 1 13:26

Yeah, definitely quite a bit. It's, I mean, I've never received any bad feedback on any of my work from stakeholders. Or if it's T., that sends me something. They're always happy with the work I do, because something I enjoy working so I'm always willing to put in a few extra hours to make sure it's good. And she was also she didn't like interest hours as well. So it's just Yeah. And she couldn't challenge me. So now I'm doing much more challenging work. That also makes me better as an employee. Yeah. Yeah. I feel like she hindered a lot.

federica giuseppini 14:18

So do you think also you're seeing on personal development, professional personal development kind of side?

Speaker 1 14:25

Yeah. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 14:27

Okay. Nice. And if we would have to talk about an ideal leader, right, the perfect leader, how would collaboration look like with that person?

Speaker 1 14:44

collaboration in what sense?

federica giuseppini 14:48

also maybe they today, you know, or the relationship or the way of working together, whatever comes to your mind

Speaker 1 15:01

Honestly, I think T., at least with the way our team is structured, and our age because she's, I mean, just a year older than me, I think that's been pretty ideal really. But as also because we kind of click on a personal level, like so, so when we get to the office, I mean, I'm always aware He's my manager. But but we can still joke around and go grab some coffee and just have a quick chat about sports or, or music because we have those interests in common. So it doesn't feel like a boss, but you're always aware that of course he is your leader, but but you don't constantly feel it. So with B., for instance, it was to me it was always uncomfortable if I had to sit next to her The whole day because I feel like she would constantly just be hanging over my head watching every move I make. T. doesn't do that. He just he looks at the work we're doing. And as long as we deliver, he, he's confident that we're working. And he just recognizes that. So he, yeah, that's been so much better.

federica giuseppini 16:28

Very nice. So, yeah,

Speaker 1 16:30

it makes it makes things a lot smoother. Because we don't constantly have to explain to him everything we're doing. We just update him every now and then. And then he's just Well, great. Keep doing what you're doing. I'm receiving good feedback on the stuff you're doing. So I mean, that's how he keeps track of it.

federica giuseppini 16:52

Make sense? So we're talking a little bit more about this informal communication type of thing, informal structure like this. Cuz I mean, you know, like you said, uh, you know, he's, he's your leader, but you can still talk to him you feel like there is some kind of good, you know? And that helps you think?

Speaker 1 17:17

Yeah, it definitely does. Yeah. Without team.

federica giuseppini 17:24

And if we talk about nordea's values, right, so ownership, passion, courage and collaboration. Can you tell me a little bit about them? And maybe how do they reflect your way of working like, do you see them? Also with other people around you? Do you see that people apply those values in their daily work?

Speaker 1 17:52

Well, I don't really collaborate with most of the others. So I don't really see the stuff they're doing. I'm really really only working with To. and sometimes I. but but nuts, but not so much anymore. Mostly it's just Tobias that I'm working with. We work together a lot. That's most of our office hours really. But But I would definitely say one thing that seems clear to me and the team at the office is, is ownership. That's always quite evident. Interesting holds us accountable to our tasks.

federica giuseppini 18:41

And do you feel like that's also the first value you put into your daily work ownership?

Speaker 1 18:51

Yeah, for me, the most important has been ownership and courage. Just in the sense that you know, sometimes Felt? No, it wasn't being challenged enough. So I felt like I could do much more and provide much more value if they gave me more challenging tasks more suitable to me and my skills. And so, I mean, I've always been very vocal as well, if if I don't feel like I have enough to do. Okay, and yeah, and just because I don't collaborate that much on tasks, it's really just my own projects. Or, for instance, it's if it's a Power BI report, no one else has been working on that report only me. So the ownership comes quite natural, obviously, because I mean, I can. I'm fully accountable for it's not really it's rarely possible for anyone else to sort of have any influence on my tasks?

federica giuseppini 20:03

Make sense? It's so specific. And if you think of Nordea as a bank. How would you describe the leadership practices? They're, like generally?

Speaker 1 20:27

I think partially because of his age, maybe. And his experiences being a recent student, the way that T. is informal, I think that's I don't know actually, it's a he's probably more informal than most. Okay. But, um, um, I'm generally surprised that leaders aren't more formal. I mean, when I took the job I I definitely expected the various leaders to be more strict, at least with the people

I've worked with, like for instance. I mean, do you remember Paul? And like Friday bars for instance? Yeah. I mean, so he's, so he's the big, important group leader of technology. And then the next minute, I'm standing at a table and we're drinking whiskey together talking about rap music, right? That to me was very surprising. I wouldn't expect that at all. But of course, there are some people that are much more traditional, but I don't meet them really haven't interacted with those people. So that's also just my experience of mostly work with Pretty informal people,

federica giuseppini 22:03

but why did you expect them to be so formal?

Speaker 1 22:10

Just based on what I've heard from from other people, you know, it's a bank, which is a very traditionally financial sort of business. So I expected it to be a bit more old school. That's really it. It's just, you know, based on things I've read and stuff like that is you know, you go home, you go to work, and you wear the suit and tie. And there's a clear hierarchy and stuff like that.

federica giuseppini 22:42

Yeah. For sure, more than startups or you know, this young social media. I mean, I went to my little bracket, I went to my sister's Office of Facebook in Ireland. I mean, that's it's like a playground. For audibles. Yeah, exactly. So much fun. Yeah. And about Nordea Is that something you would change about this? Sorry, is there something you would change in the bank about the leadership practices?

Speaker 1 23:28

I think there are too many restrictions that impede our work. So I think I understand Of course, of course, it's because there's so much sensitive information. And as soon as there's any tiny error in a bank, the public goes nuts. And because people love to hate banks, and I love to hate lawyers. It feels like those are the two most hated fields, bankers and lawyers. And so I understand the need for it, but but on just from the soul perspective of looking at how I work, and how I should be able to work, there are many restrictions, you always need some type of access before I can do something, and then I'm told you're a student, only people with leader roles, or some type of line manager can get those type of accesses. And then I'm suddenly in a position where I have to tell trust, and I can't get this access, right, because that's just not how Nordea does it. That's a part of its work culture, to keep so many restrictions, and then I mean, sometime he knows that we can't really fight it and then we're sort of have to give up on that task, then we're just going to have a have to accept. That's the way it is and the way it's going to be and we can't really change it. So yeah.

federica giuseppini 25:14

It sounds if I asked you to choose three adjectives that our leaders should have, which one would they be?

Speaker 1 25:29

I'm just going to use your picture here for inspiration.... Well, yeah, the effect of communication to me is pretty essential. I need to be able to understand exactly what is needed from a task, what is expected and be able to discuss How I can go about it, like how I can approach the task. And there shouldn't be any. So there shouldn't be any doubt in that sense, because then I'm I can't be as precise when I deliver something of course, right? If I'm not sure what he wants, then it's that's the root of a task that's that they should be able to communicate what is needed. And of course, sometimes you don't know exactly what is needed. You need to at least be able to communicate, maybe what you would like, for instance, if I'm asked to experiment a little bit, can we do this and find stuff like that? Then I still have something to go with, but they just need to be able to communicate it. Yeah, because just My Tascam I'm often asked if Is it possible to

automate automate this part of a task for instance, and then they need to be precise about what part is that and stuff like that?

federica giuseppini 27:13

Yeah. Otherwise how would you know?

Speaker 1 27:16

Yeah, yes. What else? the question was what a leader should have. Right?

federica giuseppini 27:38

Exactly.

Speaker 1 27:51

It's not exactly a word. At least I don't know the word for it. But they need to possess a sense of balance, what I mean by that is when to push and when to not push, like an individual. So with me, for instance, I enjoy working under pressure. That just makes me push myself more. That's how I enjoy working. Pressure makes diamonds and all that. But some people don't. You need to be a bit more gentle with some people, which makes them more confident because some people if they're pushed, then maybe they become insecure, or they stress about it all of a sudden, which is so they're nervous, and a leader. So I guess maybe you could put it under sort of Empathy if we're using your lists, but because they put the need to understand the people they're working with and how to utilize them in the best way. Yeah. Make sense. So maybe you don't need to be pushed than you, if you if I leave you alone. Then you, you are a great employee. And then with me, for instance, if you're the leader, you need to it well, you don't need to, but but but you know, you can always push me a little bit. That doesn't mean that suddenly I'm going to break because people are just different, especially when everything is so. multicultural, right? I mean, we have Italians, we have Germans and all kinds of people right? And they they are raised very differently and So yeah, you need to be able to understand your people and how to push them or not. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 30:11

Okay, so we said, okay, we said a couple of them. That's okay. And can you choose three adjectives that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 30:27

Never have... dismissive

federica giuseppini 30:43

in what sense?

Speaker 1 30:47

I mean, you should always be willing to listen to the people under you. If if I'm on if I'm on a task and I tell T. that I would like to discuss it because I think maybe we shouldn't be doing it. Because maybe it's too time consuming considering the value it adds. Then I should be able to just approach him and say, can we can we have? Can we sit down and grab a coffee for 15 and discuss it for just 15 minutes? A leader should be willing to listen to two people. Yeah. So and essentially, I mean, dismissive is, you know, obviously, like, you just say no, then just make them walk away, right? You don't want to listen. That's the last thing you should do.

federica giuseppini 31:45

Anything else that comes to your mind?

Speaker 1 31:54

shy, I guess. I mean, you're supposed to be sort of authority and the person that we rely on for work, and so forth. I mean, you're the one that sort of keeps the ship steady. So if suddenly you're shy and insecure, I mean that that can easily have a waterfall effect, right? But then suddenly people today they don't know what they should do, because their boss doesn't

federica giuseppini 32:37

Okay, so always. Yeah, okay. So how can we say this?

Speaker 1 32:45

So it's basically thinking that it's basically saying that I always think a leader should be confident, right?

federica giuseppini 32:54

Yeah. Yeah, no, I get that but confident then on on what because this Not about doing his own tasks, right? So it's about being with people and you know, cooperating and managing people. So how would you be confident in that sense? How would you show that you're not confident? Because I mean, I understand if you don't know how to do a specific tasks, like for instance, you know, you're so technical. So I understand if T. would be like, Hey, I don't know how to do this. You know, I'm not as confident. But we managing people, it's a little hard for me to pinpoint how you would be shy.

Speaker 1 33:38

Of course, you shouldn't. You don't expect someone like T. to know everything, the 16 or however many people what they know, but confident in the sense that he knows what's expected of our team. What is the team supposed to be doing? And how do we add value to the organization? Because that specifies what type of work we should be doing. So if I suddenly sit and talk, and if I sit and discuss with Tristan, I don't think we should be doing this. And then I argue for 10-15 minutes, I make some arguments, and I show him some data and demonstrate why it is I think it's not something we should be doing. If he just says, Well, I don't know Afterwards, that's a very bad thing.

federica giuseppini 34:41

Okay, in that sense.

Speaker 1 34:44

Yeah, I mean, he says, so he should always have a sense of direction for us and be confident in that, that we're moving toward that goal, for instance.

federica giuseppini 34:56

But it can happen that maybe he or she whatever leader, you have Then, you know she, they will need to think about it and maybe get back to you. That's okay.

Speaker 1 35:05

Yeah, of course. And that's that's fine and consulting with with his or her leader. There's no problem on that. I'm not saying that he should always be able to answer right away. But my issue, at least know that then at least he's going to investigate it. And then he comes back and tells me Okay, we should we should be doing this. Then Then there's no doubt then. Okay, cool. We're doing it. Okay, that's good. He just needs to be able to provide an answer at some point.

federica giuseppini 35:41

Yeah, make sense? That's okay.

Speaker 1 35:44

And then I don't think the third one... shouldn't be arrogant.

federica giuseppini 35:50

Okay, nice.

Speaker 1 35:53

I hate arrogant people.

federica giuseppini 35:55

Why?

Speaker 1 36:00

Well, because I think it's... arrogant people you can't really work with them.

federica giuseppini 36:20

Okay? Why?

Speaker 1 36:23

Like, collaboration? For instance, right? Someone is really arrogant. There's no problem and being confident and saying I'm good at this. So I will do this part. That's great. But you know, the whole on the best type of mentality all the time, then you it's difficult to collaborate with those people because they always have there's always going to be some problem yeah And it just it's it's, I don't think it's very good for a team. For instance, if, if a leader is very arrogant. I mean, if I. is arrogant, it's, I mean, I'm not gonna like her as a colleague, but it's not gonna negatively impact the whole team because we don't work together. So she can be arrogant. Because we don't have to be friends. Right. But if a leader is arrogant, I sort of I just feel like that has a negative impact on the entire team.

federica giuseppini 37:38

Okay, so to foster collaboration with the team.

Speaker 1 37:49

Yeah. Okay. So even Yeah, just be a little bit humble. Yeah, okay.

federica giuseppini 37:56

But, but the thing is that you're talking about the leader. So it would be okay to have a co worker that is like that, but not the leader. But technically the collaboration is mainly with your co workers. I mean, maybe not in your situation, okay. But

Speaker 1 38:11

but but if it's my colleague, either, I'm just gonna use I. because there's any problem with I., but I just know you remember her. You can recognize the name. So if I is arrogant, and we're working on a task, then I can always go talk to T., and say, Well, now it's becoming an issue. If for instance, she's constantly complaining about something because I don't have to deliver it to I., I'm delivering it to T. or some other leader. So she can impact my work as much. I'm just going to do my work.

federica giuseppini 38:58

Yeah, okay. And that's all Can you tell me about a time that you've experienced good leadership? Like a specific time.

Speaker 1 39:28

Well for me when T. transitioned to manager, I approached him immediately and said, I need more challenging tasks. And I need more tasks. Because it was sometimes difficult to fill out all 15 hours, I would finish them too quickly or whatever. So that wasn't enough for me to do and

he just made it a priority for him immediately contacted a bunch of people and found my stuff to do. And so now whenever there's something pops up, if suddenly there's an urgent task, he, he just always writes me and asks, Is it something you can do? Because he knows I'm always willing to do extra work. So that changed things a lot for me to do. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 40:32

That's good. And can you tell me this specific time that you have experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 40:45

Well, I've had a couple with my previous leader, obviously, specific well for instance like I mentioned, When when she just couldn't find me work she couldn't find me a project.

federica giuseppini 41:12

But do you remember any conversation or actual time that you can describe?

Speaker 1 41:25

Yeah, just trying to think here.

federica giuseppini 41:35

That's okay.

Speaker 1 41:41

Because for me, it's often just like a feeling with leadership. It's not always necessarily conversations. It's just how I feel when I go to work. And just, you know, how what do I feel about T. or B. Or whoever the manager is. It's not always conversations for me. But with with B., for instance, there was the time where she talked about my hours because I was being I was being very flexible with my hours and then she hadn't really said anything for a long time. So So to me, that wasn't an issue. I was just staying flexible, always willing to move these around. And then suddenly she sits me down and says it's, it's an issue and all this type of stuff. So there was just felt like, bad miscommunication and also because because I was just trying to make it, things better for it, right? You're not just sitting. So I'm not just you know on a Thursday and just wasting time. Instead, I'm saying I'm gonna move it to next week, and then I'm just going to work 20 something hours next week because I know I'll have more to do then where so I'm actually adding value. I'm not just a waste of money sitting around the office not really having anything to do. And then all of a sudden, it's it's suddenly an issue. Right. So that felt that was a little bit of a surprise to me. Really. I mean, I didn't understand why that was an issue. Anyone should appreciate it and really

federica giuseppini 43:32

tell me about it. And, yeah, gonna have a couple more questions and then like a couple more, and then we go to the background session. So if you were a leader, I'm just gonna speed it up. How would you evaluate your employees?

Speaker 1 43:52

Just one sec. What was the question? If I was a leader? How would I evaluate my employees?

federica giuseppini 44:08

Yes.

Speaker 1 44:17

Like how do I assess performance? Kind of?

federica giuseppini 44:22

Yes. Because I mean, I, you know, in the bank, there are the plds and the monthly meeting one to one, you know, and I mean, yeah, so far, I don't know if it does, it's been working out for you. So that's why I'm asking how would you evaluate your employees if you were a leader?

Speaker 1 44:46

I don't think it's a bad a bad approach. I think it's I think it's pretty good most of the time that you have something regular Also for goal setting, but it's also important to stay open beyond those meetings, so it's not just the PLD every quarter if you're You are my employee and I'm your leader, you should know that you don't have to wait another two months. Before you can talk to me about something you should know that if you feel like this is pretty urgent, you can always we can have a meeting now set one up, and then we can work through it now rather sooner than later, right. So that sense it would be important for me as a leader to be available.

federica giuseppini 46:03

How would you motivate your employees?

Speaker 1 46:18

And what sense ?

federica giuseppini 46:20

motivate them to do a good job motivate them to stay in the organization motivate them to be happy there?

Speaker 1 46:33

Well, that's a big answer. I mean, because the thing is for some people, right, it's, it's all about money. Right? That's, that's, that's really what they care about. So for some people, depending on the company as well, I mean, it's all you need to motivate certain people is a bonus system, right? And then for other people, and I think Especially our generation. Maybe a lot of people don't really do they don't really look at bonus necessarily for motivation. It's a lot more about those softer values, that there's a nice atmosphere at work that you have some sense of freedom that you're not like constantly just.. just depends. depends a lot on what type of employees you have. the way I would motivate, motivate 40 year olds isn't how I would motivate 25 year olds, you know what I'm saying? If that makes sense, because people are just so different.

federica giuseppini 48:01

But if you had your same team, right, like your team right now, if you were the leader how would you motivate them?

Speaker 1 48:23

Our team, it's all of our team, it's the way I would motivate them would be for instance, that you know, then we go out and have some type of, if it's, of course possible for the budget. I know I'm just but but, but that's besides the point. So let's just assume I have some freedom as a leader. So for instance, that would be you know, have a some sort of team dinner. When, for instance, the type of stuff when we went bowling Do you remember and then that had burgers?

federica giuseppini 49:02

Yeah, that was fun.

Speaker 1 49:04

Yeah, so that type of stuff seems to work with a lot of young people. And, or, you know, for a monthly meeting, I, you, you bring some candy and just you know, you have a little bit of relaxing fun for an hour. Yeah. So people sort of just relax a little bit, have a laugh, and kick back. So it's just to improve the morale a little bit. Instead of everything just being one, dry, heavy meeting after another. That seems very important to most of the people in our team.

federica giuseppini 49:50

That's nice. Okay, cool. So just some quick background information rain. Since this is a study of generation, I'm gonna ask How old are you? But if You're 25 right?

Speaker 1 50:04

26

federica giuseppini 50:05

Okay, and what's your position in the organization like officially the title?

50:14

It's it's student analyst or something.

federica giuseppini 50:19

Okay, so still So the CIO office.

Speaker 1 50:24

Yeah

federica giuseppini 50:31

Okay, now I'm gonna send you the link to a second survey, which takes two minutes to do. And then you're officially done.

9.1.10 Interview with Nikolas

Thu, 6/4 11:21AM • 42:03

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, leader, good, leadership, leading, organization, discouraging, situation, management, narcissistic, motivate, understand, culture, role, position, person, adaptive leadership, team, performance, manager

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

00:00

All right, we're here. Cool. So do you remember when you got off for your job? position? Your current position?

Speaker 1 00:08

Yes.

00:10

You have to speak up.

Speaker 1 00:11

Yes, I do.

00:13

Awesome. Can you tell me a little bit about it?

Speaker 1 00:17

Like the situation?

federica giuseppini 00:19

Yes the situation.

Speaker 1 00:22

so we're talking about like when I was offered the current role that I have right now with the management. I got a call about from first from Mike and saying that there's gonna be some changes soon. And then shortly, I got that during the day and Thomas would reach out to me later in the day, then I got a text saying that he would have time at six or seven in the evening. Then we had to talk and he asked me if I wanted to be his management partner and and Yeah and that he that I've been doing a good job working for J. for and that's why he wanted me as well.

federica giuseppini 01:09

Okay, and In this position do you cooperate with a lot of people

Speaker 1 01:16

with tons of people.

federica giuseppini 01:17

Yes. And sometimes I guess you have experienced to unofficially manage some

Speaker 1 01:30

technically yes unofficial.

federica giuseppini 01:34

Okay. Did you know this before starting your role?

Speaker 1 01:40

I didn't really have a comment job description with my role is we're just the organization was changing. And it wasn't clear that time because it was happening. So it wasn't November that I was told and it didn't really take place until January, February this year now to go a lot of months without telling anybody about it. And that was probably the toughest part in that I basically held it. I didn't tell anybody until like 2020. But it didn't come with any description didn't come with anything. What do I need to do? And there wasn't a lot of clarity around it around it. So yeah.

federica giuseppini 02:31

But you said you work a lot with people.

Speaker 1 02:33

Yeah, right.

federica giuseppini 02:34

Yes. People have different levels in the organization,

Speaker 1 02:39

pretty much all the different levels.

federica giuseppini 02:41

So from students to people's leaders, I guess?

Speaker 1 02:48

so with students, graduates, team leaders, middle management, and then you have one layer of the senior management He could be considered the VP level.

federica giuseppini 03:03

And when you get off for this job position, was there something you were afraid off? And if yes, what and where you were? Was there something that you were looking forward the most?

Speaker 1 03:18

I think.. for me... For me, it's always been the biggest challenge has always been my experience has been in the position that I am. I don't have any, any experience to lean up against. But that's also what kind of like drives me. Because I have no experience and I'm basically thrown into a situation where I have I have no toolbox to lead myself up against. So I'm getting to build that at the same time. And because I talked to so many middle managers, and also team leads, I get to see what good really is and I got to learn what I think I want Take it up and then what I see is less good I also try to understand that So, if I see somebody that is not leading in the right way, I try to understand. So, it is middle manager is basically discouraging his team leads, what is the case? What is the root cause. So, I try to understand that as well in order for me not to be to make the same mistakes.

federica giuseppini 04:28

So, you said the motivating, when the leader doesn't motivate employees?

Speaker 1 04:35

It's not a result of him, not motivating. It's just in it, you often have subject matter experts, and they might be sitting at the wrong levels. So, that means that they're really knowledgeable within their craft, but when it comes to actually managing and leading, they're not that good.

federica giuseppini 04:57

But how so? Because he said he literally used the word demotivating

Speaker 1 05:03

the motivating is relatively discouraged discouraging because they can motivate based on them knowing their knowledge, but then because they want to micromanage, then in that way they're discouraging or dissenting their director leaders or even the teams that these leaders are managing.

federica giuseppini 05:23

Okay. So in some ways you can say that you have seen if we can call it bad leadership example. So, yeah. Can you tell me of a specific situation, like a detail specific situation where you think someone failed to be the leader that they should have been?

Speaker 1 05:46

So there's a case right now that we're working with. a situation. The person is really smart, but what is when it comes to actually leading in the right way, he just Can't he... This where two cultures is also clashing. So he's very pro one culture versus another. So the other culture can see it. And his decision isn't necessarily the best because it's basically discouraging 80% of his team. But that's also where you see some of the mistakes of having to lead from one country to into another. Because the cultures are very different. So the Nordic culture is a lot more where you need to give them room to maneuver, whereas the Baltic culture is a lot more about. If the leader says this, then the other level have to do it in Denmark, they don't follow that. And all the scandinevian countries, they basically will question it until they actually feel like they will go through it. So that's where you start seeing the clashes between two cultures. And in that case,

that person is not grayed out because he's basically descending or disincentivizing a lot of his team

federica giuseppini 07:06

okay. But can you tell me about your specific situation I can you describe a situation with your experience? Like the words they use where they were, where you were

Speaker 1 07:23

trying to say that is as high level as I can. So it was one situation... like I can only.. let me frame it in the correct way...

07:42

I mean, obviously nothing goes into the thesis. Like it's just I have to analyze it.

Speaker 1 07:49

So what do you mean the specific situation, how much details?

07:55

what I want to get is The setting the words, the attitude and what you perceived that.. what you felt.

Speaker 1 08:09

So the middle manager was basically what he was saying was would not be possible to be carried out. And then we'll take a different situation.... So basically, there's been a leadership change in his part of the organization, one of the managers that was there in that team that he was leading. So you have a middle manager, and then you had a team underneath where he was the leader left. And then the position was never felt. So there was a lot of time where time was just passing by and nobody was actually leading and he was basically having to deal with quite a few people in the Nordics and all of these people they don't like him because he first of all, he is English is really crap. really slow. So he and also the way he communicates on mails from what I've seen is that he's basically familiarizing... call it favoring the people in his in the Baltics over the Nordics. And that is, you say that is the motivating the ones because they would be afraid of their job moving to Poland, for example, or the Baltics,

federica giuseppini 09:26

so being replaced or being moved?

Speaker 1 09:29

because they want to be replaced. So it's basically a change in strategy for that area. So that is basically creating uncertainty in the team because they feel like their job is on the line. Because they have a very pro Baltic leader and he has not done anything in order to actually keep them in check, keep them in check, but keep them like certain that nothing's going to happen because nothing is going to happen. So I've often have to go to his to one of the senior leaders and tell that person to call them in for a team meeting be there. So basically, we have a senior leader going all the way down to our top team employees. And even in some cases, the guy that I'm supporting, which is a VP tougher position. So basically, he has wasted two of his hire up managers to go down and talk on a team level to calm the situation down. That's not ideal. That's not leadership. It's leadership from the two other people that has gone on and kind of have to calm the storm.

federica giuseppini 10:52

Okay, what would have you done different If you were in this position ?

Speaker 1 10:59

first So all I would have found somebody who could have gone in an interim basis. And I would have had him actually, there was a candidate already that I've suggested to his leader to go in. And that person has been in the bank for 10 years. He knows the team. He's good at calling him. So he's really good on the people dimension. But I also highlighted that the risk is that he's not good at actually fixing some of the problems that we have there, but those are not going to be fixed. Even if we move it to the Baltics. They're actually going to get worse but basically, what I've done is I've had him so that the people dimension is under control until we find somebody that was gonna give us both the people dimension as well as what we needed to change in the area.

federica giuseppini 11:57

Okay, How does this affect you?

Speaker 1 12:07

affect it and affect me because at the end of the day, I will do what I think is the right for the employer of my company for Nordea. So I wouldn't like if I see that he's, he might cause 80% of the people to leave he, some people actually did leave because of it. And in such a critical function to the bank that because of them leaving we were worse off during these Corona times. So that's where...

federica giuseppini 12:37

it did effective maybe indirectly?

Speaker 1 12:42

it affected. There was a risk that was increased because of him. Doing as he did, and actually not being a leader, but being more of all. She was too focused.. Can you even say things like he was mainly.. he was mainly focused on the.... So there's been in Nordea, there has always been a strategy of cost optimization. And he was trying to focus primarily on that. So he was just focusing on one part of the strategy without actually on all the other strategic pillars that we have at Nordea. So because he's always been seeing it as main priority is cost optimization. That's why he's had the Baltic priority. And that's why he's never really had as a priority to actually lead them. So for me has always been more like the more I can get to baltics the less the cost base will be and the more people I will have around me without actually realizing if that if he were to do it the quality will detour significantly cuz the Baltics are not delivering on at the same rate as, as the ones with Scandinavia. And especially that function would be really visible. Because it's right on the line of fire firefighting. And if we are not able to firefight quickly, then it's basically visible to the entire bank.

federica giuseppini 14:45

And you remember, a situation again, a specific situation where you have felt, appreciated and reward that by one of your leaders?

Speaker 1 14:57

Constantly...

15:00

Even it can be like a very small example, even a comment or?

Speaker 1 15:07

So, so the guy that I'm hoping is once a month is always telling me that I'm doing good work and that he's hearing it from a lot of people. So even last year he was doing it he heard from the the project that I'm assigned to the project manager said the same to him. So he's good at reaching out to people and understanding and that's the same with one line manager, she's also getting the same information. And she knows me well enough to know that I don't care about all the

good praise, but I'm more into actually getting to understand work and improve. So she would also give me that dimension. And that, to me is really good people leadership. And she's really good on that dimension. And then he tries to understand the individual and she has, she knows Probably better than anybody.

federica giuseppini 16:02

So you felt understood?

Speaker 1 16:04

I feel understood and valued, I always feel valued.

federica giuseppini 16:12

Do you feel like you feel like you need not that you need but in some ways you need this. This feeling in the sense that maybe some comments they make they really motivate you in some ways to a better work or

Speaker 1 16:32

I for me personally, I don't need it. I always I don't need inspiration to to go do my job.

federica giuseppini 16:40

Why do you think is that?

Speaker 1 16:45

It's how I've grown up. I've had a dad that hasn't needed it. And he's always just been encouraging productivity. So I wouldn't need to have anybody come and motivate me Even if somebody discouraged me, I, I will still continue to the work. I will just be going in and be bottling up I will take it on and I'll continue delivery. But I can see the importance of some people needing it.

federica giuseppini 17:20

So if we talk a little bit more generally about leadership, how would you define the role of a leader? Like who's a leader to you?

Speaker 1 17:34

This is a tricky question. I view leadership across different dimensions, you have product leadership, and then you have..

federica giuseppini 17:44

Yeah but what is a leader to you? I don't need to know the company's structure of leadership.

Speaker 1 17:52

A leader to me is somebody that can clearly articulate his vision and is smart enough to understand where an organization needs to go and clearly take on. Clearly to clearly put in the right projects and activities on satellites strategic goals, KPIs, and so on. And then also trusting people finding the right people for the right positions, which is probably the hardest thing for any leader to do. And then it's also to coach them and, and also understand the differences. So one person, for example, might need more management by fewer methods, whereas others they might be needing more coaching. So it's basically you adopt the way that you lead the people who need to be flexible in your approach. And that's just because all people are different and some people need to need to have like different ways of being that

federica giuseppini 19:01

It's really interesting you say this. You don't mean work with people, a lot. Lots of students and graduates and in some ways, unofficially, you manage their work, at least not done. But their

work. Did you notice that there was this difference between the people you work with for some people were motivated by fear, like you said, and some people were just,

Speaker 1 19:28

I have never met a student that has been motivated by by fear and I would never adopt that tactic.

19:35

Why?

Speaker 1 19:38

I don't find it. I don't, morally I wouldn't be fine with me using such a tactic. I don't want to hurt somebody else's feelings are going to basically be hard on them just because I wouldn't want that way myself.

federica giuseppini 19:58

You said some people need it.

Speaker 1 20:00

Some people will need it. But that is the one thing that I would never do. I would adapt my, the way that I work with people or try to understand them, but if they need to be managed by fear, I would never, I will never use it. It's not who I am and I would never adopt such a method.

federica giuseppini 20:15

That's okay. I'm sure that you don't but I am talking about the people you met so far, like you specifically specifically said that you wouldn't use a student's done so does that mean that you think it's more

Speaker 1 20:29

so the reason why we love your students because they... for them, it's they haven't been developing yet. So it's more for senior people that are start using it for books for students, because they're still developing. So if you somehow say the wrong things and you hurt them, they don't have anything to lean up against and actually to know how to cope with it.

federica giuseppini 21:04

What do you think helps people to cope with this? Like specifically?

Speaker 1 21:08

it's different from person to person, a lot of people wouldn't be able to cope with it. Other people are good at stopping for example. I've heard about people that basically the stand up and say, Hey, I don't I don't think it's fair what you're saying now honors standard, you need something to deliver to senior management, but I don't think it's fair that you're taking out your frustrations on me or you're going down this path of leading in an aggressive manner. So those people are really good at stopping it and instead of taking it then there's others. That will take it and they will say, continue taking it and then they will continue to the And then there's the third group, they won't they will be discouraged.

federica giuseppini 22:20

So before I asked you what, like a specific situation where you have experienced bad leadership, right. Can you tell me about a specific situation where you have experienced good leadership?

Speaker 1 22:36

I Just need to think. Yeah, that was one that I really liked was last year. The guy that I'm working for he Well his family members passed away, and in a town hall, he was able to

articulate the feelings that he, he went through. So he was really good at basically creating a situation where people could see that he was human, and that he is just like them. And I think that's really important when you get up to a high level of management is that you can still take the time to show you show the entire organization that that you're a human as well.

federica giuseppini 23:35

Were you there?

Speaker 1 23:37

I didn't see the tunnels or later because it was recorded. And I also call it on and I thought it was really powerful that he was able to take five minutes during a town hall and tell the entire organization what went through and his emotions and all that and that sometimes that is the most important thing for any organization is the people that they have in the organization.

federica giuseppini 24:02

But how did you feel? What did you think of when you watch them?

Speaker 1 24:07

In that it's good to have leaders that focuses on the people dimension as well.

federica giuseppini 24:14

But how did what did you feel? What did you feel?

Speaker 1 24:18

I felt encouraged. Like, I felt like I'm working for the, for the right person. And I and I know love working for him. And those is one of the things that I love about him. He cares about people. Another situation is he's also he's also helped me when I was going through rough path with a previous leader. He was able to be there and take action and guide me through that. What else is there? Yeah, I think those are probably the two best examples that I can remember.

federica giuseppini 25:00

It's really okay. Very nice. My I have two quick questions, but it's kind of a follow up to this. Let's say we can elaborate a little bit more. Can you think of three attributes, adjectives that that a leader should always have?

Speaker 1 25:19

Empathy, flexible leadership is more adopting adaptive leadership methods and charismatic.

federica giuseppini 25:36

Okay, where did you pick this?

Speaker 1 25:39

So empathy is that you're good at understanding people and you're good at relating to basically have a high EQ, emotional intelligence and you're able to understand what makes different people take and we're able to understand what drives them and And so on, that is always important when you're building your management teams, and also to be able to provide and also just relate to them, that's the most important. And that's also ties into the second one, where you need to adapt your leading method. So once you understand who they are as individuals, then you are good at basically saying, if I need to talk to one in my team, I might need to spend more time with on a weekly basis because he needs more coaching, then you might have another one that is doesn't require much, which is she doesn't need in so much coaching to just letting them do what they need to do and just check in with them once a month. And then there's others that are very performance based they would need the management by fear methods in my opinion. So that person that understands them and sees that how to manage

these three different people will get the most out of And so those two are mainly good methods for building your team was the last one was more for a larger organization, in that you need to kind of like have a vision stand by your vision and being able to inspire the mask organization around it.

federica giuseppini 27:21

And you think that's charismatic? So you need to be..

Speaker 1 27:25

So for me across body leader is somebody with a clear vision, they're able to communicate it and they're basically they're able to inspire the majority of an organization in Your country

federica giuseppini 27:42

do you think that a person is born as a certain personality that makes them makes it easier for them to be charismatic in the sense or is there something that people can just learn..

Speaker 1 27:58

I don't think you are born with it, it's is the situations you have seen throughout your life that has made you into the leader that you become. That's what I've always heard. So so I'll just say like, for some people that might have had a tougher childhood, they would probably resort more lot of the facts on it, but it's just my own opinions. But I think people that have been through a tougher childhood resorted more to management by fear. And that might be something that they've seen from their parents and so on. Then you have others that might not have resorted to it but have been, it could maybe be that they have been growing up in different countries, they might be able to listen more. And therefore understand that every culture is different. So there will be more willing to listen and maybe adaptive leadership method. And then there's others that whatever they've been through in their life are just good people and they to want to coach and help people develop more, they might not be going up to the highest leadership positions. But they're the ones making the biggest difference because they're actually able to get that personal development into, into the organization. So for example, as my own manager, she could have had a higher job, but she doesn't like all the politics and all that that goes up on that level. And therefore, she likes to invest her time in actually being with people and nothing is really valuable and I think is whatever she's been through her life is what has made it like that. I don't think she was born. Like that. I'm always off to believe that. Whatever you encounter throughout your life, and you've seen.. doesn't have to be in your childhood coupled with your teenage years and in your adult years. All of these different phases and what you go through and each one of them is what it will also shape your leadership. abilities and how you lead.

federica giuseppini 30:03

So we all agree that personal experiences shape the way you are. But do you think you can train yourself to have the skills like to focus on people and like their development in the sense?

Speaker 1 30:27

I think people that are leaders that have the people that are mentioned are often extroverts. So I don't think you can teach an introvert... an introvert to be an extrovert and therefore be a good ehm good people leader. an introvert might be good to actually know more about something like for example, a product leadership or policy introverts being good at art because they really know a certain product or it component really So therefore, they will be passionate about it. And they will also inspire the people that are underneath them by saying like, Hey, we need to do invest in this because I have this vision of it being it and that way they're able to get people on board, because they're just passionate about something. Whereas the other ones are just passionate about developing people, because that's their extroverted nature. If it makes sense,

federica giuseppini 31:25

very interesting. Okay...

Speaker 1 31:31

So I put in some things, I think you can develop it but in terms of your focus, I don't think you can develop and then often it happens, that you once you see good leadership that you start adopting it. So I also think that the people that I've worked with, I can see from where they've gotten the The way that they lead with from Forever they trust and confide in. And that's where I see the biggest difference is that they are also leading in the same way that what their mentor might be leading in. And I think it's because that's what their mentors are preaching and therefore they think the same word for them.

federica giuseppini 32:20

So they take them as rolemodels?

Speaker 1 32:21

Yes and then they talk the same ways of leading as they have,

federica giuseppini 32:26

Is this how you feel about your leader?

Speaker 1 32:30

A little bit, but he's also doing a little bit differently. Not all the same, but a little bit different. And a lot of the same.

federica giuseppini 32:37

Do you see it as a role? Do you see him as a role model?

Speaker 1 32:40

I do. I do. I do. But uh, but I have a lot of role models. And so I will be able to see which things I want to achieve and there's things I don't want to keep. And I think one of the most important things that somebody told me last year was that Always look at all of the good things that you see from your role models and only take the good things.

federica giuseppini 33:11

And another question is, can you tell me three attributes that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 33:21

They should never be self interested or selfish, selfish one I don't know this one.. this one should never have a focus on money. I don't know which term

federica giuseppini 33:37

do you mean money as performance?

Speaker 1 33:39

Yes, performance based you can say performance based because everything once you get to level money equals performance.

federica giuseppini 33:47

Okay, Just to understand.

Speaker 1 33:52

narcissistic.

federica giuseppini 33:55

Why did you pick there three?

Speaker 1 33:58

First one is the selfish is That you can have such a big impact on organization because if you're only interested in your own, that means that you would never put in the right things for the company. And you're never interested in the well being of your, of the people you have around you, as you're viewing them in a way that you want them to help you get what you want. So it could be that..

federica giuseppini 34:31

Don't you think that's beneficial for the.. For the company in the sense of performance, I mean, they have to make money, right?

Speaker 1 34:39

Why would that be good for the company? Let's say that you are in a company for 10 years you've been growing throughout the chain, but basically at each each level of the chain that you've been, you've only been there for yourself and you're taking the easy wins out long term that would never be good for the company because that means that you will try To only achieve on the easy ones. But you were never able to actually take the bottles and say like we need to transform. If we actually want to focus on the writing in the long term. What I'm saying is that you would, in a selfish, interested that you are only interested in growing majority of times you will only be interested in growing up as far as you can. So therefore, you don't care like who you cross on who you throw under the bus along the way. That will come back to haunt you later point. But you're also not putting in the right things for the company. Because you're only taking the easy ones. So if somebody gave you a target, you will take it, you will achieve on it. But you will not push back and say this is this thing, this target or this thing that I'm given does not make sense. Why not? Because you're only interested in seeing that it's an easy victory I can achieve it. And then the other side is that if you're given something complex, you will push a lot of people in the organization to over deliver. But that is not healthy for your organization either. performance based, can't tie into the other one is that you're probably more focused on getting money for your own personal, not personal. It's basically you are more interested about money than people and the company. So that means that your, the way that your salary package would have been that it's primarily focused on these performance things. So you will only focus on those things. And again, we'll leave out actually focusing on what they're actually putting in the initiatives that the company should be putting in in order to be competitive in the long term with his peers. And that's not leadership either this is... Yeah. And the last one narcissistic is tough... narcissistic is that you could basically manipulate your way to get what you want. And this is basically these three things are all tied together.

federica giuseppini 37:28

But you picked narcissistic and not manipulative, why?

Speaker 1 37:35

because narcissistic people are really really really smart. Compared to manipulative you can be manipulative and and not be smart but Narcisistic people are generally smart people that know what they're doing. Again, this I don't have any facts on

federica giuseppini 38:01

No, no, this is a study of perception. So that's how it should be.

Speaker 1 38:06

But it's how I view narcissism. I view that people with narcissistic tendencies are generally smart. And they're therefore able to much better actually to use people's weaknesses to actually get what they want. So without them realizing that's the worst part of narcissisms. And then once

you realize that it's really detrimental to the people, the person that was used, because you're being taken advantage of you're not seeing it at the moment. And that's often when you see people that have seen that happen. manipulative, extended, narcissistic leaders go through some... ehm..

federica giuseppini 38:49

I have a question. Do you think you picked us because you have experienced on yourself?

Speaker 1 38:58

performance I've seen, it's evident all over the organisation, selfish I have seen as well. They're only trying to further their own career and they don't care who they are which which is a burden along the way. Narcisistic I've never encountered... if I even if I haven't counted I probably wouldn't know.

federica giuseppini 39:26

So, how did it come to your mind?

Speaker 1 39:34

I used to read a lot about corporate governance in university and there is a role he's talking about narcissistic CEOs

federica giuseppini 39:44

interesting... Okay. Let me see I don't want to exceed the time.. some background info I know your name. I have to ask you hold your your hold you are you're still 25 because you're turning ..?

40:06

I'm turning 26

federica giuseppini 40:08

you studied international business?

Speaker 1 40:10

Yes

federica giuseppini 40:11

What is the title you have in your organization?

Speaker 1 40:15

At the moment its management support offers to just likely to change to either management partner or executive advisor.

federica giuseppini 40:26

And you're Danish with an international background?

Speaker 1 40:29

Yes.

federica giuseppini 40:30

Two more things before we go estate interview, I'm going to sign up for a second survey. And the last question is.. do you before you start? Do you think there's something.... do you think there's something I should have asked you about leadership or something I should have focused on or Lastly, is there something that you curious to know about the topic?

Speaker 1 41:04

The curiosity will come when I read the paper? No, but in general, what about leadership? For me, what I was fascinated with what I've seen in general, is that men with feminism qualities are also good leaders. And then also, a lot of females, in my opinion, would make better leaders than men. And but there is also a very, very small percentage of the fee was was masculine tendencies that have just as just the same problem is what you're seeing in the male culture. But I think that is also tying in to the materialistic nature of women, and that's why I think that would be better leaders.

9.1.11 Interview with Patrick

Thu, 5/7 1:16PM • 46:08

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, leader, team, age, experience, manager, leading, company, employees, situation, good, reporting, scenario, talking, feel, work, handled, first impression, effective, person

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:09

is it okay if I record the conversation?

Speaker 1 00:12

Yeah it's fine.

federica giuseppini 00:16

All right. So I'm gonna start. So right now you have a leadership position.

Speaker 1 00:26

Yeah correct.

federica giuseppini 00:27

How many people are you leading?

Speaker 1 00:31

13

federica giuseppini 00:31

are they all in Denmark?

Speaker 1 00:37

6 of them in Denmark, one in Sweden and then the rest in Poland. I think after you left I went into reporting directly to Magnus. I have taken his team employed to me.

federica giuseppini 01:08

Before then you were an executive advisor?

Speaker 1 01:15

Yes exactly I didn't have any employee under me, when I was at Capgemini, at my old place, I had about 20 direct reported to me, and then probably another 30 others that were like matrix management reporting to me on a day to day basis. So this is quite a small team at Nordea but it's different from the executive advisory role.

federica giuseppini 01:55

Wait I will try to change the connection because I feel like it's not working Now.. can you hear me better now?

Speaker 1 02:04

Yes yes

federica giuseppini 02:06

So is there something you were afraid of? Before starting this leading position?

Speaker 1 02:13

Not really because I had leading position before so I was fairly comfortable with, with the role I think I know what makes a good manager. And I wasn't I wasn't apprehensive. I can remember my first management role at my old company. And I remember being nervous before. Before that. I was 25 ish at the time I can remember being nervous than but not anymore.

federica giuseppini 02:47

makes sense. And what were you looking forward the most?

Speaker 1 02:54

For me, the best thing about leading a team is just that you get to I suppose part of their development and rather than just going to work doing your own job, and then going home again, you've got to actually care about people about their lives and try and make their lives better. And that's the part I enjoy that more than I enjoy coming to work for Nordea you know or coming to work for any company, I like the people aspects in my life. So, for me that was like a good positive, I don't anything really different day to day in terms of scope but The people aspect of it is now a new responsibility so that what attract me to the role you know, if I just look at it day to day, it's about the people aspect of it

federica giuseppini 03:55

okay. And can you tell me of a specific situation Where you felt like you had demonstrated to be a good leader?

Speaker 1 04:07

So many to choose from ahah, I think So for example, in Nordea there's a couple of assignments that have been, that are almost impossible. So they are. If you compare them to any other company, they're the biggest in Scandinavia. Some of them are the biggest in Europe, and they are delivered by my team. And what it means is that they need to do overtime and need to work weekends. They need to work and deal with a lot of pressure. And some of them are really experienced, some of them probably had like 30 years in the industry. maybe in between five and 10, some of them between zero and five And I think the challenge in that type of environment is that you need to find a way in which you can get the best out of all of them. And the way in which the example that I'm sort of talking to, the best way that I found to do it is a mixture of making sure that people are confident enough to make mistakes, and they feel supported. And you know, so in a high paced project, like the one I'm talking about, mistakes are inevitable, people are going to make mistakes. But if they're scared of making mistakes, then that's a really bad situation to be in, they won't. They'll work slower, they'll work more methodically and you won't get the outcome that you want. And the outcome that we want is that something happens by a certain date, so time is of the essence. Whereas if they're not afraid to make mistakes, they work they work more confidently accelerate a little bit. So they need to know that they have your support if things do go wrong. And then secondly, you need to make sure that you're sort of empowering them. So that they feel that way. I think I can find the balance between doing those two things. And I can do it in a way that allows me to make sure Nordea also get what Nordea needs out of this scenario in the project specifically is CBx in the

data center. And yeah that needs real high levels of people management every single day. I'm taking calls off the team at 10 o'clock on a Saturday night and Friday on a Saturday and Friday nights and in the week, and that project is a good example of where you need to be going extra miles from a leader perspective.

federica giuseppini 06:53

That's a good example. and if we talk about leadership in general how Would you define the role of a leader who's a leader to you?

Speaker 1 07:04

So I think I think if you talk generally, it's very difficult to define all of the traits that make a good leader because I think people respond different, differently. So instantly respond. I need to be led is very different to what someone else needs to be led. There are some people that respond really well to being told exactly what to do, how to do it, when to do it. And that's how you get the best out of them. There are other people like me, who want to be left alone, and they want to be told about this the outcome we want, go and get it in the best way you want and they want to have a bit more creative or solvency, a little bit more autonomy. So I think a leader, a good leader is someone who identifies for each person in their team? How do I get the best out of them? What have I got to change about myself? And what have I got to help them change about themselves to get the best out of this relationship? If I tried to manage all of my 14 in exactly the same way, some of them would respond very well, and some of them would respond very badly. So I think it needs to be someone who can do that assessment, like who can self assess and can assess other people quite well, who can identify the drivers for each person, and then act accordingly. You know, they can change themselves, adaptable enough to change their own way of management so that they, they are useful to every member of the team and not just a small percentage

federica giuseppini 08:52

So you said that people are different in that sense. How do you recognize Do you think it's personal Not at trade in the sense that it depends what kind of person they are, and personality they have, the way you have to approach them.

Speaker 1 09:07

Yeah definately 100% I think confidence, comes into that sort of stuff age to a degree experience comes into it to a degree. And also environment people, you know, you can speak to the most confident person on earth and then put them in a scenario that they don't like, and they're not as confident. So it's somebody who can look at all those different variables, and then then make a decision. I also think that you need to be someone who is prepared to correct themselves. So, you know, everyone is human instinct to make snap decisions and first impressions of people. And they're useful because as a manager You know, I took on my management role on February the first and I had to be valuable to the team to lead the team from February the first I can't say to the more, I need six weeks to assess you or before I can be effective. So you rely on on first impressions you rely on what to gauge how best to manage certain individuals. But what I found is that, you know, by focusing on each individual person by asking the right questions by listening to people, you can very quickly confirm whether or not your first impression was was right or not. So there are certain people in my team were two weeks down the line, I think very differently about them than I did on the first day. And for me, that's another part of being a good leader. You know, you need to be able to recognize when your first impression changes, doesn't mean you're wrong. It just means you've learned new things that mean you need to add some different way and also The idea of having people, they get better and better and better over time. And therefore, the way in which you manage them on day one is very different to the way in which you should manage on day 100. So again, it needs to be someone who's adaptable that can continue to evolve along with the team.

federica giuseppini 11:23

Yeah, that's a very good answer. I was wondering just if you have because you said you change your ideas about some of your employees. So do you have a certain unofficial protocol to follow? To try to understand people faster? Like, do you think there's a secret for that?

Speaker 1 11:40

I think that.. I try not to allow other people to influence me too much. So, you know, when I took on this team, I had a lot of the old managers reached out to me to say, Oh, you've got so and so. Let me tell you about them. And I always listen But I try not to let it inform my decision. I feel that I've got a good set of things that I think a good employee should have. And I try to assess them by those things rather than someone else's interpretation of what they employees because they might think, and effective employees very different. And then the other aspect, I think, is that you need to test them. So you need to put people into positions that are slightly outside their comfort zone, need to challenge them. And as long as you're there to support them if they get things wrong, and you're there to empower them, then it can only be a positive thing. So again, don't be influenced by other people, ask the right questions and actually and test and challenge your team to see how far you can go with it. But then also you need to be throughout that process you need to be a present leader, you know, it's not something you can do with 5% of your day you need to be doing it needs to be attended to need to be present, there needs to be reachable if you turn your phone off at five o'clock every day and you are not available until the next day then it's not effective so you need to be doing those things we need to be doing all the time and consistently.

federica giuseppini 13:29

And talking about Nordea's values, which one of them do you think that he relates more to your way of leading people?

Speaker 1 13:42

I know ehmm which one do I think relates more to my my, I think it's probably a combination of a few of them. So for example, like it's important to have.. You know, the other day I, there was one of my team that was working a lot of overtime, in unpaid overtime, and a lot of stress and I asked him to take his wife out for a meal, and, you know, we would cover it as an expense. So those types of things are good. I think it's good to do like team building exercises, and team building days where you go for a meal at night and whatever. And all that sort of thing. Modesty, I think is important. I think that you know, your team should look to you as an example and as a leader and as someone who's absolute but you shouldn't be stealing all of the good stuff of the team do for yourself, you know, your, your modesty should be first so the team will be working with the team. I think they would A lot, even a short space of time. I don't count that as my success I count is our our success in IT I count that success. So I think I think those two together would be the most prominent ones. But I think it's a combination of things. I think if you lean too much one way, then that makes you a bad leader it needs to be someone that can pull all the stringhts at the right time. if I was "all over" I wouldn't be a good leader.

federica giuseppini 15:35

When we talk about Nordea in general, how would you define the leadership practices there?

Speaker 1 15:47

So I think actually, by comparison to other companies I've been quite impressed with Nordea's, they have things they have a they have a program and a curriculum that Specific leaders, which is new to me, and my old companies when I had managmnet role, it was more like lead the way you want to do it, where at Nordea they've got a lot of tools, a lot of learning courses, they've got a lot of data repositories that are just visible for leaders. We have town halls and meetings that are just for leaders. And the idea is that they give you information, like real time, data real time, but then also the skills to be an effective leader. So I think Nordea is pretty good they focus a lot

on making their leaders effective so if compare it to other companies I think that's probably ahead of other companies.

federica giuseppini 16:51

So you said that they focus on making leaders effective. Exactly, yeah. In what way do you think they do that?

Speaker 1 17:01

I would hope that the vast majority of leaders at Nordea have been chosen because they've already demonstrated that they have the skills required to be a good leader. Being a leader isn't something that you, you get good at, and then you're good. You need to continually get better and better. And it's always something that you can improve. So I think by doing things like making courses available for, you know how you should learn a performance review, for example, or how you should conduct a team meeting, and how you should support employees in a difficult way, job position, all of that sort of stuff, just how to define your leadership skills and ultimately makes you more effective. Given all leaders in Nordea the same set of skills so therefore, if someone moves from my team to another team or from another teams, my team, which has already happened, than there should be able to see commonality between me and the other line manager. It shouldn't be a situation where everybody wants to work for me because they think I'm a great manager or nobody wants to work for me because I'm a useless line manager should be. Everyone has preferences, but there should be commonality across all leaders. So I think by doing those types of courses and making that type of data available, then you're also increasing the effectiveness of the panel of leaders, not just individual leaders.

federica giuseppini 18:41

Okay. And is there something still talking about the general way to lead at the bank? Is there something you would change about it?

Speaker 1 18:51

Tha I would change.. ehmm I think we've got probably too many Leaders actually, we've done a lot of work in the last, with this last org change this year to reduce the number of leaders. So I think we're moving in the right direction, we we had a very big pyramid. And now it's a bit flatter. But I still think there's more to go, I still think we can make it a bit of a flatter organization. I feel like you know, I could have double the team and I've gone through example and even more. And yeah, you slowly reduce the number of levels. And I think that's a good approach so yeah maybe that's the only thing I would change in the short term.

federica giuseppini 19:42

So what do you think would be the most beneficial impact that this theater organization would bring?

Speaker 1 19:50

I think a flatter org means that people feel like they're closer to the decision making power? If you're So say for example, my 14, if only three of them reports directly to me, and then another three to them then I have people that are in my team, but that three levels below. And those people probably feel like they're too far away from where the decisions being made. With a flatter organization, you get rid of that. So people are much closer to the decision making authority. They're much more involved. People feel that they're much more part of the team. And they also feel like they can approach you a lot easier. If there are three people in between me and somebody I appear to them, or somebody appears to them.. like it's an unapproachable and too senior. If we get rid of those layers, and just as everyone reports to me, then then they can all talk to me one on one, questions and whatever. So you sort of find that you dry a bit of a different culture by having a flatter organization I think it fits quite well with the European culture. If you look at companies that tend to be in Asia and those types of cultures, they tend to

be a little bit more hierarchical. Whereas I think I think the European culture in especially in Scandinavia, a flatter hierarchy is actually a bit more aligned cultural as well.

federica giuseppini 21:32

I actually agree with that. What is the biggest challenge of faces, like meeting people?

Speaker 1 21:46

So I think, I think when I maybe not now.. I don't think I have any challenges now. I think over my career has been a few challenging scenarios or situations. I can remember having to deliver bad news to people, that's never nice telling people that they're not going to get a pay rise or that they haven't got a promotion, denying people holidays and all that sort of stuff. That's never nice. But you know, you have to accept the leader that not every day is good and you need to ehmm that just comes with the territory. if you spot something that your team members didn't, it might be a work related thing, or it might be something that is HR related. You need to be able to be able to call them out. And that's where that's where I mean, you need a balance of values. To give the example again, if I was all about having tea, And then one of them needs me to talk to them. It's very difficult to go from firm to that type of conversation. Whereas if you're a leader that has the right balance, all levels and boundaries, then you can play cards, depending on the situation. I feel like that's our hope at least that's how I am as a leader. You know, when the time calls where I can have fun and be part of the team and be collaborative, etc, etc. But when this scenario was when I have to have one to one with people and I have to tell them what I expected, what I don't expect, what I will, what I will allow and not and I can deliver messages that aren't as positive as people would hope you need to be well balanced in order to do that, I think.

federica giuseppini 24:00

Can you choose three attributes that a leader should always have?

Speaker 1 24:08

So I think they should always be somebody is empowering. I think that's the most. That's probably the top one for me. Somebody who is loyal, I would say, I sort of knew I sort of combined, loyal and supported together by loyal is very important. And then thirdly, I would say ehmm I am trying to think of one word, someone who I want to try and say, someone who this is reliable. Word reliable doesn't sound good but You know what I mean? Is someone who if they say they're going to do something they do it, they are trustworthy that's a better word you know, you need to be able to trust your line manager or your leader. See, I would say empowering, loyal & supportive and trustworthy.

federica giuseppini 25:24

Why you think those are the most important ones?

Speaker 1 25:29

because I think I think ultimately it creates the teams based on trust and increased teams based on give and take. And in my experience, that is the only way to be successful. People need to come to work and feel like they are taking something, not just a salary home. So people are all motivated by different things. They come into work and they're only getting one type of, let's say reward B, B financial or, you know, whatever it is they're only getting one type of reward their, their happiness and the team's productivity, everything else won't last for long. But I think if a leader has those three qualities they can build a team is much more bi-directional. So for example, you know, somebody would help Nordea achieve Nordea's objectives, but at the same time, objectives is much more give and take, I think that team is much more productive and much more sustainable. And, and what you're looking for as a leader is to build a productive team that is productive forever, not just for a week, you know. So that's sustainable elementis there so I think those Those ones that I called out how to create a team. And then also, I think

that they demonstrate, you know, their core competencies, their core characteristics of a person. So they demonstrate that someone is a good person and not a bad one, you know, anyone can act confident. Anyone can, you know, in a certain way for a week or two, but if the ones I chose, I think what I call competencies where if someone's demonstrating them over a long period, you know, that that's someone that's actually how they are. And I think that's, that's the, from a team to productive

federica giuseppini 27:41

nice. And on the other hand, choose three attributes that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 27:51

Selfish, shouldn't be selfish. They shouldn't be yeah Shouldn't be selfish. They shouldn't be ehmm What's the word like? They should be. They shouldn't be they shouldn't favorite one particular person or they shouldn't be biased towards one particular yeah bias and they shouldn't be remote you know they shouldn't be a type of leader that when things go bad you never hear or when things go bad, they shy away. They should be present. involved.

federica giuseppini 28:43

Okay, and whether you think these are the worst characteristics to have as a as a leader.

Speaker 1 28:48

Well I think they break down the trust. You know, If you've got someone who is more Focus on themselves rather than the team then nobody wants to be in that team why they don't trust that they are genuinely there for their for the whole team. If they're biased some people feel like someone's being preferred or preference over another person then I can create animosity and then thirdly, if there are -- it comes back to creating an environment of trust and support where people feel empowered to go and make mistakes and push themselves and try new things. If If someone if a leader is remote and then never present, then they don't feel like they can do that because the impact of it will be directly with them. Their manager, I'd like to see my team continually push themselves and challenge themselves because they know if something goes slightly wrong I will support them and I will getting sorted and that might be told my boss to avoid an impact or it might be working day to day with dawn to actually do work in reverse has happened. But just knowing that I will be there is a good thing if they thought I was just gonna shy away as soon as something goes wrong and I am only there when things are good then I think that they would take the same challenges that they do.

federica giuseppini 30:32

And can you help me have a specific time where you yourself have experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 30:40

Yeah many. I've had leaders that I don't trust. I've had leaders where they say one thing to you but act very differently. I've had leaders that have got no experience of similar similar laws or similar jobs. And so they can't be empathetic towards how I'm feeling or what I'm going through. I've also had leaders that don't really care, you know, you call them up with a problem, and they don't even care about busy day or whatever. And that's not their priority. And I've had leaders that tried to, rather than encourage the good things that I think I do, or the good parts of me and try and bring those out more they, they don't sort of recognize that they try and paint you with the same push. And I really don't respond well in those types of situations. You know, I just, I lose interest in myself. So I've had a number of them.

federica giuseppini 31:56

can you tell me a specific time?

Speaker 1 32:08

Well, I can think of one person who. And I say that the scenario was that I thought that I was, like undervalued. So I had a one to one with him to say that I felt like I wasn't valued. I wasn't really taking anything. By coming to work. I didn't think I was learning much. I didn't think I had the right visibility didn't feel any attention on me. And his answer was that I should prepare to leave the company and by by doing that, by by making myself so good that the companies want me I will bring attention to myself, whereas and I thought that was really, really bad. And he actually got taken out of the role about three weeks later, and I had the same conversation with his replacement. And I told him what this guy said. And he couldn't believe that he handled situation that badly. I came out about one to one just thinking what was the point is my own boss thinks I should leave, then clearly, there's no hope in this company. Whereas if he'd have handled it differently, and how to plan together to address all of those concerns, which is exactly what I would have done with someone and I and I've since had people come to me with similar concerns and I spent a lot of time with them payment plans together now on paper that we can then implement. if he would have done that would be different but he did complete opposite and I think I went home that I thought.. I was so so annoyed.

federica giuseppini 34:04

Can you tell me of a specific situation again, where you have experienced good leadership instead?

Speaker 1 34:11

Yeah there was this time when I was working in australia and I had applied for or been nominated for promotion to Deputy Director and for very good reason I didn't agree with they didn't give me the promotion. And I was ready to walk out the door but my manager called me up. And he wasn't part of the decision, but he called me up and he was really, really supportive of how I was feeling. And he gave me examples of how similar things have happened to him in his career, and how, with hindsight, it wasn't the worst thing. He helped me To get him a plan so that we would try again the following year because he did all those things. I felt like well, I am still valued I can. I can, I can try and change what's happened. And I ended up staying, I ended up going for it the following year, I was awarded the next year. And he's, he's one of the best leaders I've ever had. But the way he handled that was the way he handled everything. And it was really supportive. And you know, he would he would speak to me every day for the next few weeks just to make sure I was okay. really attentive. He definitely got the best out of me on that situation.

federica giuseppini 35:47

Okay, so there's some kind of role model for the way you lead?

Speaker 1 35:55

Yeah I have got two and then the two best leaders that I've ever worked for and I would work for them again, in a heartbeat. I try and pull the best of both of them together and then manage my team using the best of both of them.

federica giuseppini 36:19

And also I know, so your employees are mainly full time. But you also work with students before. I mean, you manage them when you work with them. Can you? I know there is a difference between the time that they get to spend because one is full time one is part time, but can you pinpoint some of the same main differences on their approaches to work?

Speaker 1 36:47

Yeah, I mean, I've had about 14 students reported directly to me, on top of my team and I think that some of the differences are that they're really energetic. So they want to, they want to work, they want to be doing new stuff. And they want to take risks and try new things, which I think is good. Some people. And you know, it's difficult to draw complete differences, because not every

student is like that. And not every person who's been in the company, 50 years is the opposite. So you get you get differences, but I think a common trait in that type of demographic is that. I think also, typically there, they haven't got the same level of experience as someone that's been around for 30 years. And I actually think that that's a good thing or can be a good thing. Because it means that they look at problems in a new way. You tend to find 30 years and the problem comes up. You look at it, the similar ways you have to know. Do you have the time? Whereas that's not always the right approach. I think someone that is new to a company or doesn't have 70 years of experience they can find it should find it a lot easier to try and apply a new lens to something. And that's why I like to have students into the team or a team with people that have been there for many years because then you get the best of both approaches.

federica giuseppini 38:30

A couple more things before I let you go. So since this is a study of generation, is it okay if I asked you how old you are?

Speaker 1 38:49

I am 31 as of two months ago.

federica giuseppini 39:03

Okay. And also, did you receive my sir, very first survey? I will send you a second survey, which is as quick as the first. And while I do this, I'm going to ask you one last question. So do you think there is something I should have asked you, or you want to share about leadership or even you would like to know about it like you're curious to know. Relation to age, anything.

Speaker 1 39:42

I think the big thing with age and age and anything call age and leadership is people associate age with experience and that is completely wrong. And, you know, when I, when I apply for jobs, I take my age I take any date on my CV. If you looked at my CV, and you compare it to someone who is 20 years older than me, you probably wouldn't see much difference. So I think one of the things that's interesting about people in leadership roles is that is a perspective on that. But also, people that are chosen for leadership roles is interesting to see, you know, the average age of a certain level in a company. At my own company, I reported to the vice president Global Head of cloud, and there was six people reporting into them. And I was the youngest by about at least 10 years, and there's been loads of scenarios where I was the youngest find out type of range. And I mean, even at Nadia reporting into Magnus, I'm the youngest by nine years. I think. So I think it's really important that people don't associate age with experience. Because because they don't always separate the two enough.

federica giuseppini 41:31

Yeah, I must agree. This is one of the first findings I figured out talking to people. So instead of, instead of talking about like, they talked about age, but they should have really talked about experience so like when you first let go, but the young person Oh, but she wasn't that experienced as a leader or the opposite way around. I mean, it really goes both ways. And then when you start talking, then you start understanding that hey, okay, it's it's also about the experience that I had, and when They come in from and it's just people should not narrow it to only dentists, it's very true.

42:07

You might find a 28 year old who's been traveling for the last three years, and they've experienced, you know, 10 different cultures. They've worked with people all over the world, and you compare it to a 45 year old who's lived in England, their entire life, and that's different, different experiences, but very different ages. And then, you know, the experience of the younger person that they've got there might be more relevant to a certain scenario than the older person. So you need to be looking at your experience in relation to the value that you want

them to add and the scenario that you're going to put them in. And it's really, really wrong. And I've experienced it a lot myself, where people that's it think that because you're young, you lack that experience. And that's, that's a really, really dangerous way of thinking. And people have a tendency to say the word age when they mean experience. And again, that's, that's really wrong. So I try to be really careful about where I use the word age or the word young people should be judged purely on what they're capable of and experienced.

federica giuseppini 43:31

Yeah, I could sense this. It's a it's a sensitive, more sensitive topic that I expected when I was talking to more experienced leaders. So aka a little bit older than usual. So I really had to be to address the words right as well about actually. And when I talk to the younger people that it was more like it more generalized towards like older people. It's just yeah, it's really interesting.

44:00

But I find that it affects the way the way that you act as well. So, so for example, if I think about how I used to perform the style of my career when I was 21-22, to sort of 25-26, I would, I felt like I would compensate a little bit for my age. So you know, I will maybe be more, more confident or more aggressive in a certain situation, because I felt like I needed that in order to compensate. So I think I think if it's handled incorrectly, it can be bad on both sides. It can be by other people's expectations, but it can also affect the way people behave themselves if they feel like there have been some of those incorrect expectations. So yeah, I think I think it's really it's a really difficult thing to control and something that We will be interested to really assess because I think it has quite wide reaching implications. And you know, people are coming out of studies younger people are more experienced and more knowledgeable now your age, they tend to do more stuff. The working environment is a lot quicker. So it doesn't take as long to build skills as it did 50 years ago. So we should expect that our demographic of age in certain models decreased as a professional society.

federica giuseppini 45:44

Yeah, I agree. Yeah. Well, cool. Thank you so so, so much for taking the time to talk to me like really

9.1.12 Interview with Robin

Thu, 5/7 1:17PM • 37:42

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

leader, manager, experienced, performance, employees, collaboration, people, position, nice, leadership, goals, evaluate, year, practices, happen, job, banking, bit, motivated, bank

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:00

First of all, is it okay if I record this on my computer just because I want to makes it easy for my transcripts?

Speaker 1 00:06

Yeah, yes. Okay.

federica giuseppini 00:08

Awesome. Thank you. So yeah, give you a little bit of breathing on the on the research already. Let me know if you want to know a little bit more I usually take questions at the end so it's not as biased. Otherwise I can just get started with the questions if you're okay. Do you remember your first day of work?

Speaker 1 00:38

Yeah.

federica giuseppini 00:39

Can you tell me a little bit about it?

Speaker 1 00:45

I started as a as an intern in a branch in business banking. I was met by my former manager, I was her around, she scheduled the whole day only to me. So I was following her around and she was introducing me to the whole branch and the relationship managers and told me what the overall picture on my scope before of what I had to do in my internship, had an introduction to Nordea as a bank and what Nordea stands for.

federica giuseppini 01:29

How long was the internship for?

Speaker 1 01:34

I had my internship five or six months and after that I was employed as a student and I worked as a student for three and a half, four years before I started as a graduate. So I have been in the bank since 2015.

federica giuseppini 01:54

So this was like your only work experience like the only employer?

Speaker 1 02:00

Yeah, yeah, almost.

federica giuseppini 02:02

Okay. Nice. Wow. And so before you started your job in, let's say in the graduate program, it was something like what were you looking forward and what were you afraid of?

Speaker 1 02:16

I was looking for was probably a position where I could develop and see myself in a long term, gain some work experience, personal experience from. What I was afraid of was like ending up in a position where it just worried used as a sort of cheap labor force, that was my main concern.

federica giuseppini 02:56

Did that happen?

Speaker 1 02:57

No it did not, I am quite happy about that.

federica giuseppini 03:07

Why were you afraid of that? Is it because, you know,

Speaker 1 03:10

Because from time to time I experienced that I was just used to cheap labor force and I was really hurt. So I was just sitting around doing my job but my manager at some point didn't want to invest the time in me that I wanted. So I was my main concern.

federica giuseppini 03:39

Like as a graduate, you never felt that way?

Speaker 1 03:45

Almost never it had happened from time to time, but that could be caused from some other external factors that you are not in control of. When you get over that point, you often see why that happened. So

federica giuseppini 04:01

Can you tell me about time where you felt most appreciated and rewarded by one of your leaders?

Speaker 1 04:15

In Business Banking when we had this huge compliance KYC project where I was assigned as the main driver for our branch, and we're on top of that, and all the reporting and follow up stuff when we actually were number one in that part of the country all the time. My manager really appreciated my job, appreciated what I did. So I was quite happy about that.

federica giuseppini 04:47

How did he show appreciation he or she?

Speaker 1 04:50

was he told me he was happy about it. So very direct.

federica giuseppini 04:57

Okay, so open communications. Can you remember any situation where your age played a role?

Speaker 1 05:15

played a significant role, but it's more like the lack of experience that have played a larger role.

05:25

As a student or..?

Speaker 1 05:28

Yeah as a student I mean due to the young age and lack of experience... I think those two goes hand in hand. So from time to time, I have my...ehmm now thinking about it I have experienced because I worked with customers from time to time when they found out how young I was. Suddenly, I didn't have the same authority anymore

federica giuseppini 05:58

because how old were you when you started?

Speaker 1 06:00

I was 22 I think.

federica giuseppini 06:12

Okay, I think okay, so I guess yeah, I mean, because I guess I guess the bank wants to give this image of, you know, being serious and very corporate. So it's a little hard to put up 22 years old operating directly with clients

Speaker 1 06:29

Yeah it's difficult.

federica giuseppini 06:32

Well, seems like you managed.

Speaker 1 06:37

I think the only reason for me applying for graduate position was actually because one of my managers from business banking, he was when I finished my BA, he had a talk and he could offer me a job as a relationship manager, or, but he could also still be a student. And then take my master's degree and then apply for graduate positions you thought it would be better because it's more dynamic position compared to Relationship Manager. And in the long term I would benefit more from that. So I followed his advice and yeah here i am.

federica giuseppini 07:19

And do you feel good about your decision?

Speaker 1 07:22

Yeah I actually do

federica giuseppini 07:26

You know, just going full time accepting your job and maybe gaining a little bit more money.

Speaker 1 07:32

Can you repeat that because of fall out?

federica giuseppini 07:35

Do you feel like sometimes you think about the other option and then not necessarily you regret it but you just think about it. You know, maybe more money or..?

Speaker 1 07:50

Not really, when I when I look back, I have been in business banking from 2015 to 2019 when I look back on that, I don't regret that I didn't take a position as a relationship manager. It would be like a static place to work and it was also in Aarhus in another branch, there's just a limited amount of options to work on in Jutland.

federica giuseppini 08:29

So it was also geographical decision.. And you think you've been learning more because you call it dynamic environments. So I'm guessing.

Speaker 1 08:40

Yes. I am learning more yes.

federica giuseppini 08:45

And can you like talking a little bit more about leadership in general, okay. How would define the role of a leader?

Speaker 1 08:55

A leader is a person that encourage their employees to do the job. They are the person that employee can go to if they have problems that need to be solved, there are a bit out of scope. A leader is the front runner, the leader shows the are showing the way and coming first. That's my opinion of the leader.

federica giuseppini 09:26

Yeah, that's that's pretty nice. And if you think of this ideal leader, so like the perfect leader in your head, how would collaboration look like with that person?

Speaker 1 09:40

there will be a good collaboration. The leader will take the time to understand the employee and the employees, issues and problems that needs to be solved. It's a sort of a, it is a collaboration between the two because both the leader employees should gain something from this relationship.

federica giuseppini 10:06

But what can the leader gain them?

Speaker 1 10:11

From time to time employees can challenge their leaders on specific points if they think stuff can be done other ways. And a think a leader should be open and there should be open communicaiton becasue if an employees thinks they can do something he or she should be heard.

federica giuseppini 10:32

Make sense.. So but so far you have talked more about people skills in that sense of leadership. Do you think it's also important about professional experiences?

Speaker 1 10:46

of course professional experiences is important but you will get that on the way and the more professional you are, the more trustworthy you can be in some points I would say has a huge role in it.

federica giuseppini 11:06

So, because you said you can acquire the skills right professional skills, you think you can acquire the other set of skills that we talked about. So you know, open communication and so forth?

Speaker 1 11:17

YEah I think at some point, all of us we have the skills but we need to find them and need to find out how to use utilize those skills. So I think it is possible to learn the skills to be the perfect leader.

federica giuseppini 11:39s

All right, and talking about Nordea's values right so ownership, collaboration, passion and courage. Do you like to think reflect on your way of working or the people around you

Speaker 1 12:03

From time to time, some of them are more present than others. In my current position, I have seen a huge lack of ownership. So it's not like feel from time to time that people don't really think about our values and just act as they want to do instead of actually thinking about where they work and how we are working. So that they could affect our ways of working even more.

federica giuseppini 12:47

Which one is the one that you see the most?

Speaker 1 12:57

collaboration. In the team I am in right now we have vary collaboration across. So that's very, very nice.

federica giuseppini 13:11

Okay, so that that also enhanced the performance, I'm guessing.

Speaker 1 13:17

Yeah. exactly and then also helps increasing the passion when we collaborate.. the values somehow they affect each other.

federica giuseppini 13:31

Yeah, makes sense. If you think about leadership practices in the bank, right, so how would you describe them at Nordea?

Speaker 1 13:50

Just thinking because I have experienced so many different kinds of leadership in that era. But quite funny. I have Both experienced a very sort of textbook leader that when she went on the leadership or management course, the bank immediately when she came back, we were just like to try to do a 180 team. We needed to use these new practices because sometimes forced through didn't didn't work that well because people were just tired of changing the structure all the time and then I have experienced the moral sort of dynamic leader that knows all this stuff. And utilize, put works on the team sees the team and the weaknesses and where we can improve. which one of these The thing that was most beneficial for you, that's the last one, when the leader is just not a textbook, because everyone can read a book. Try to use that theory and practice but it's not that easy.

federica giuseppini 15:26

Do you think it's more about being adaptable to your employees?

Speaker 1 15:34

It is not only the leader responsibility, it is also the employees. in my opinion is a collaboration between the whole the whole team so everyone should at some point, adapt to the team's values and practices. And then there is the leader that states the majority of it. But only to be adjustable because if something doesn't work changed.

federica giuseppini 16:08

In fact, like talking about change, what would you change about the practices like the general practices in the bank?

Speaker 1 16:28

Communication wise. I had experienced from time to time that we get a statement from management or law a bit lower, and then it's stated and then we just wait around for a month or two before we see anything happening. I am really not satisfied with communication from time to time I think it's as transparent as they want us to believe it is.

federica giuseppini 17:15

So you're saying the from the moment they you know, maybe share it on the news or intranet, then the actually changes happen within like a mountain but after a month or so. Okay.

Speaker 1 17:29

I just experienced that from time to time where they tell you ah we are going to do a restructuring, but we're not going to tell you when. But it's nice to know.

federica giuseppini 17:45

You always want to know what's going on around you, because you're likely to be affected.

Speaker 1 17:49

Yeah exactly because I like to be in control. So that's maybe I am having bit biased on that, but I'd like to know when they make such a statement. I would like to Okay, when does this happen and I but I just need to know when maybe long term effects would be.

federica giuseppini 18:12

maybe just have the ability to have open communication within the manager just asking questions if you feel like it.

18:19

exactly. And I also know that it's not always possible for them to tell the whole story. But then again, is it worth just saying half of it? Is it just part of just making noise for not reason?

federica giuseppini 18:39

But I mean, that's so do you think that's subjective? Do you think that the leader makes this decision?

Speaker 1 18:45

Not always, not my direct leader. but it's more like from the top level. what I have experienced from my direct line managers they have tried to give all the information they can and try to answer all the questions and scope they are able to talk of.

federica giuseppini 19:12

where you got the feeling that he was never 100%?

Speaker 1 19:16

Exactly.

federica giuseppini 19:18

So they would you know, my guess it must be so hard I mean they probably want to share as much as possible because you guys I mean, a team is based on trust as well. So

Speaker 1 19:29

It is not always the easiest position they are in.

federica giuseppini 19:36

And what did they say when you got the sense that they were unable to be honest hundred percent?

Speaker 1 19:42

Something I have heard the most is "I cannot comment on that." But then at least you know that they know something.

federica giuseppini 20:02

Okay, so talking again about leader like forgetting about Nordea there for a second.. Can you choose three adjectives that a leader should have?

Speaker 1 20:18

They should be inspiring, accoutnable and logic.

federica giuseppini 20:49

interesting. Why did you choose those?

Speaker 1 20:51

was something that came to me mind but I started with the accountable. I like that you can that people are accountable for what they say. And if someone tells me nothing, I count on them that is true. If I can't explain it or disagree isn't accountable for what my leaders say, I would not trust the person and then logic the leader in my opinion should not should be able to filter out the emotional part. Sometimes just look at it in a logical and rational way that okay, we say we need to do this because these things happen, and it will have a negative effect on maybe we need to lay off people... What was the first one that was inspiring? Yeah And then also, I think a leader needs to be inspiring. Cause if you can really be inspired by a leader in your position, why are you in the position the leader should inspire you to develop yourself and aim for higher goals.

federica giuseppini 22:31

Okay, if you can choose three adjectives, right that should never have which one would they be?

Speaker 1 22:40

that's more difficult.. ahah

federica giuseppini 23:11

You can think of one of your latest experience if you have any.

Speaker 1 23:26

just searching for the word right now it's like.. a leader should never be unresent

federica giuseppini 23:41

In the sense that if someone needs?

Speaker 1 23:43

Yes the leader should have time for the employee. A few weeks ago because I was doing something completely different but a Leader should never be quantitative in the sense of like, you cannot put everything into spreadsheets. there needs to be a human behind.

federica giuseppini 24:33

Okay, but would that be related to just the performance of work or?

Speaker 1 24:41

just in general some people are in my experience some people are just so keen about putting everything into spreadsheets and make everything quantitative

federica giuseppini 24:53

Okay, can you can you give me an example of that? putting behavior To quantitative data

Speaker 1 25:04

like when you only when you are only looking at performance and only measure what is measurable And if you do it that way then don't invest the time in figuring out why the performance history and just look at the data and say okay, you served you out.

federica giuseppini 25:34

Okay? So it needs to be understanding of the people and their situation? a broader view?

Speaker 1 25:44

Yeah I think the leader should never be like, narrow sighted. I was just elaborating on your broad view...

federica giuseppini 26:08

Why did you choose those?

Speaker 1 26:12

I think some of it it's from personal experience and what I see people do in different situations and how I have acted myself when I have had in leading small teams from time to time. Because I know for a fact, I'm very happy about putting everything into spreadsheets. And that's not the way it works. It works well for a lot of cases, but in the end, you need to have the understanding and then the person behind it views as well.

federica giuseppini 26:56

Interesting and when we talk about Your leader and performance How does he or she assess your performance?

Speaker 1 27:08

Right now I'm in a little funny situation because I have a line manager but I don't work for him. But how we assess it we, we are beginning of the year we had this, we had a it's called goal setting exercise where we have set up like I think five goals for me. And then when we are halfway through the year, we are going to evaluate these five goals. and see From what I got, I need to get some feedback from the persons I work close with and what they think about me and these these goals and then we are evaluating everything and see Do we need to adjust the goals now. We are on truck and So on so it is I would say more soft approach

federica giuseppini 28:07

and do you think that works out like Do you think we'll ever review the performance it actually reflects reality?

Speaker 1 28:17

it's the first time it's a new approach we are doing but I am more happy about it compared to the old one. It was not there was more static

federica giuseppini 28:30

was the old one the PLD?

Speaker 1 28:32

yeah, it was. And that was every quarter. So it was, for me it was too often and now reviewed and now it's only twice a year. You actually have time to get more into depth with your goals.

federica giuseppini 28:51

feels like it's more self-aware in some sense. interesting. If you if you were a leader, how would you motivate your employees?

Speaker 1 29:13

First of all, if we say I know my employees Well, I would obviously motivated. If we had a sort of agreement day we are motivated by, like, positive attitude and funny jokes. It would be like a train waiting said if they were motivated, would sort of a goal. Like when we complete this task, we are having a Friday bar, I would do that. I wouldn't say any specific thing I would do it it would be more like a collaboration with the employee. Some motivate, I will try to use that information to make the motivation if that makes sense.

federica giuseppini 30:12

So if you has an hipotetical team, then you would first talk to them and set up this rules, not rules but you know, under written rules.

Speaker 1 30:21

Yes exactly

federica giuseppini 30:22

Okay, and how would you evaluate your employees?

Speaker 1 30:30

I would obviously evaluate them on things that I used to evaluate them on. That is the performance that are quantitative, but I would also take into account that they need to provide me with some feedback on their closest like stakeholders and so are they happy about the way they work? And then take that into account we get to more human perspective.

federica giuseppini 30:57

Okay, so trying to stay still objective.

Speaker 1 31:01

Exactly. And then from what information we came from all these stakeholders and your performance, can we can we like, set a new target for you to develop yourself on these these aspects and then work from there.

federica giuseppini 31:20

And so when you talk about the evaluation, your performance of the way re evaluated, right? So we can say that it's based on, let's say, personal development. And so it felt like the way you were talking you felt like it wasn't really performance, but it was more development. Do you feel that way? Do you feel like they look more at your development than your performance like than your actual numbers?

Speaker 1 31:51

that's difficult.. No I wouldn't say the one of them are taking out... a look at the performance and evaluate that. But at the same time, you also need to look at the development of the person and see if the person is moving because if the person isn't developing it might also be difficult for the performance to increase.

federica giuseppini 32:35

Before you said that, you have a line manager but you don't really report to the person. How does that work?

Speaker 1 32:47

Because right now we are all graduates are reporting to the same line manager But we are allocated to different parts of our organization where we have a direct Task Manager.

federica giuseppini 33:13

the rotation responsible?

Speaker 1 33:16

Yeah, exactly. Okay. So, and then when we get feedback feedback from our task managers we are working with, evaluate that with our line manager.

federica giuseppini 33:30

Okay, how do you feel about this because it feels like already like two layers of leadership

Speaker 1 33:37

layers. So, in the beginning, I sort of hated a bit, but now I'm used to it and learn to cope with it in a way it doesn't bother me. It's actually from time to time. It's nice to have a sort of a manager

that don't have the full insight of what to do so you can share new things with that person. At the moment, I like it, but I think in the long run, it wouldn't be suitable.

federica giuseppini 34:07

Why?

Speaker 1 34:10

Because then you will never get this sort of deeper relationship. And it would be more and more difficult to talk on your talk about your work tasks, because it's, I know my line manager. I think it's 15 graduates reporting to him and if he had needed to know, every single thing we do, he could, he will never be able to do other stuff than reading up on what we do. But also, I think it's a special case for for me and my fellow graduates. Okay. All right. So let me just ask you something. Few background info questions. Okay. So you said at a point you said you're 27 years Yes I am 27 in April.

federica giuseppini 35:13

Oh soon, okay. We don't say happy birthday before because it brings bad luck to so you know, otherwise. So what are you studying?

Speaker 1 35:25

I studied finance and international business.

federica giuseppini 35:31

Okay. So you graduated two years ago or last year

Speaker 1 35:38

Last year.

federica giuseppini 35:38

and your position in the organization you said you are in business banking?

Speaker 1 35:42

Oh, I worked in business banking but now I am part of the CIO office.

federica giuseppini 35:48

Yeah. Okay. So you're in the IT technology. Right now you're on the run it right. Exactly. Okay. Perfect.

Speaker 1 35:59

is a bit special case for me because when I started my graduate position, we were called group portfolio management. But we were merged into the it division in January.

federica giuseppini 36:11

How did that work out?

Speaker 1 36:17

It was a drag and drop. So nothing changed.

federica giuseppini 36:23

Okay. And where are you from?

Speaker 1 36:26

I'm from city or region from Denmark, right.

federica giuseppini 36:33

So that then I need. and do you think so I'm going to send you another survey, okay, which is kind of the same as the first one. And it takes again, two to three minutes. Maximum, I promise. And in the meantime, my last question is, do you think I should have asked you something else about leadership? Do you think I'm missing something or something you really want to share or you really wonder about leadership?

Speaker 1 37:05

I think you covered. What I also would say is leadership. Think about anything that I really think you're missing out on. Good go through and you had a nice red thread interview and also that you could refer refer back to what I have said before and so that worked out very good.

federica giuseppini 37:36

Well, thank you for the compliment.

9.1.13 Interview with Rosa

Thu, 5/7 1:19PM • 50:36

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

leader, people, experienced, feel, bit, leadership, students, employees, trust, graduates, team, person, meeting, leading, work, lots, productive, valued, good, micromanaging

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

Speaker 1 00:12

Um, do you remember the your first day of work? At my current work or? yes, I do

federica giuseppini 00:20

Can you tell me a little bit more?

Speaker 1 00:27

about the graduate program or the student position?

federica giuseppini 00:37

it like it's just through to have a like a initial view of what you do so maybe you can start with your new job and then you can tell me how you got there.

Speaker 1 00:46

Yeah. So I joined my... I started in my current job in december so like half a year ago, I joined as a graduate in enterprise architecture. So at that point now for two years, but the point I had been there for one and a half years as a student, and so yeah, so joined full time I was pretty excited. pretty nervous.

federica giuseppini 01:18

Why were you nervous?

Speaker 1 01:23

Probably about how is my new team gonna be like, if I'm gonna perform well enough, what it's gonna be like ahah.

federica giuseppini 01:33

How do you feel now?

Speaker 1 01:35

Now I feel I feel pretty, pretty confident and I am very enjoying it Yeah,

federica giuseppini 01:42

much better moves really good. Um, what were you looking forward to starting your new position?

Speaker 1 01:50

I really hoped to develop myself to learn more about the area to get my Education to work practice to see how I can contribute with that.

federica giuseppini 02:09

that's good. Um, how does a normal day at the office look like?

Speaker 1 02:19

I wouldn't say that there is a normal day as such every day for us to be like there. I would say that there is a normal week that we have certain meetings in, in different days in my team, but like a normal day I either working from home or working at the office normally pretty lots of meetings like that takes up most of my days. And then in those times when there's no meetings, then I'm producing whatever it is that I'm producing.

federica giuseppini 02:52

That's good.

Speaker 1 02:53

I don't know if I can actually ask at this point. You're writing your thesis about leadership and 30. So actually, before we move forward, if you could give a little piece, what is it that you're actually?

federica giuseppini 03:10

Right, I try my best not to give too much. Now, but I can tell you that I, so I'm trying to see how leadership the concept of leadership changes among, you know, the different level of the organization. So, I started with students and are moving to graduates, and then I'm gonna move to the full time employees. And so I just want to take a look inside of like, you know, what you guys think about it, generally about leadership. And then I go a little bit more specific into more detail. So there are a few questions and then yeah, it's about perception. It's about feelings. It's about you know, yeah.

Speaker 1 03:52

So are you doing it for Nordea or do Just kind of like as case company

federica giuseppini 04:04

Kind of as a case like I started with, like talking to Tristan about it like randomly because you know he's Nico's from. Yeah. So he's often here at home. So I was just talking to him, I was like, Oh, you know, I'm really interested in this, this and this. And then I was like, maybe I can interview you. And then I was like, he was like, Yeah, I think they actually could be a good case study for you. And I was like, yeah, maybe that's a good idea. Because it's, you know, a little bit more in some, some traditional organisation. So I think that really gives a good example of, you know, structure versus leadership and like the different concepts and how that works and how that can be matched.

Speaker 1 04:44

What was it that you studied again?

federica giuseppini 04:46

innovation and entrepreneurship.

Speaker 1 04:48

at CBS?

federica giuseppini 04:52

yes

Speaker 1 04:52

Okay. let's continue then.

federica giuseppini 04:57

makes sense. I mean, I would have told you at the end of the interview, It's completely fine. So can you tell me like a time where you felt most appreciated and rewarded by one of your leaders?

Speaker 1 05:20

I think actually, one very recent example was just two days ago, when because I am now doing a graduate rotation. And so I've been facilitating team meetings in my team that also held in my leader to do that and take responsibility on that, but now, when I will be gone for some months, he needs to kind of like take the throne back. And we had a first meeting that I was leading on Wednesday, and I joined just to listen in and then I have this happy to have for all the weekly meetings we had we like I always made up some slides for that meeting and I always chose a weekly animal so to speak on animals I like and it was kind of like a silly thing to do in the beginning but then the team started liking it and it kind of like became like a team job kind of some people were expecting or what is the Alamo this time, but I so when I when I kind of like stepped down I thought like okay, he's kind of like, too important to do anything silly like that. So I didn't think he would continue but on Wednesday when I joined the meeting, and I was just so surprised to see that there was actually a week we had him all again and he's chosen a dolphin to those slides and then he also wrote to me after the meeting like that, it's gonna be very hard to survive the rotation without me and he really appreciates the job that I have done. The dolphin kind of shows that that so I really felt that there is like also the the casual side of me is kind of like seen at work. Appreciate it. So yeah, I felt appreciated, both like about my birth but also about my, just my character.

federica giuseppini 07:09

So that's really nice. So now you're gonna start another rotation you said, right?

Speaker 1 07:16

Yeah.

federica giuseppini 07:16

How is it to always change?

Speaker 1 07:19

This is my third change as a graduate. But as a student I changed a couple of times it is it is a little nerve wracking kind of to, to settle into a new team and new dynamics and work with different people but I also enjoy it. So I think it's more I'm a little bit nervous, always before but when it starts I am Very excited about

federica giuseppini 07:45

every rotation you have a different like, leader, Manager figure?

Speaker 1 07:51

Yeah.

federica giuseppini 07:52

So every time you meet the person and then and you never know which one is going to be right so you just yeah.

Speaker 1 07:59

Yeah I kind of know But then it's kind of like of course starting to build a relationship from from scratch because it's a more personal relationship I would say when you just start, you know, seeing each other at work versus when you they are actually responsible for your development and all that.

federica giuseppini 08:19

You remember any situation on work where your age played a role?

Speaker 1 08:34

Maybe like in this current role, then I had just started recently. My colleagues were joking a little bit about something like something about how it was something about if you go to a restaurant, or or team, kind of like let you Have one drink and one burger. And then somehow it was a discussion how, like, if you could only pick one, which one would you pick? And then my... Someone from my team. I know it was actually my leader who say like, oh, but that's obvious for you, Rosa, because your students like you'd always need to pick food because suddenly you've kind of like assumed that. Like, first of all, I wasn't a student anymore. I was a full time employee and secondly, kind of like assuming me to be young and poor and hungry. It was super weird that he did that in front of everyone and I didn't really like it and then later on someone else choked Something about like you being a student. And then I correct that, like, I'm not a student anymore. I'm a full time employee. So when I was very direct myself, then they stopped.

federica giuseppini 09:49

So but you felt so you felt a little bit and maybe

Speaker 1 09:57

I felt somehow that I am different to other team memeber like I am not considered as valuable and Like, full time, even if I am there full time.

federica giuseppini 10:16

Okay, and moving a little bit more into leadership, the leadership concept, right? So how would you define the role of a leader?

Speaker 1 10:27

I see leader, as a person whose responsibility is to enable other people to, to achieve whatever the team has to achieve. So pretty much I see them as an enabler. So I have this I really believe in this kind of like servant leadership philosophy that believes there is there for you. Not that you're there for the leader. Of course it goes both ways. They know what the team they set the direction and They set the purpose but on the other hand that you can get there and do your best and they are there for you.

federica giuseppini 11:16

And if we could think about like an ideal leader kind of figure, how would the collaboration with the person be?

Speaker 1 11:26

perfect leader.. mhhh it would be like my leader now ahah just very open and caring and making time for you and making you feel safe. With all your questions just making themselves available whenever you need, no matter if it's work related or if it's something personal, you want to share. They they have the time for you, they try and prioritize you that they also are very clear what they want from your work. You know what the expectations are?

federica giuseppini 12:09

Okay, make sense? About a little bit more specific about Nordea. So we all know about the four values, courage, ownership, passion and collaboration. What did they mean to you? And what do you think which one of those applies the most to your ways of working?

Speaker 1 12:29

I think the one that resonates with me the most is courage, especially in the nordia context, which is very traditional, traditional, very large, corporate, corporate. I think it takes lots of courage to, to be who you are and work in a way that you find valuable And also, it's just it's just really it's I think it's the, like courage is the starting point of everything. Like if you're not the courage, you know, if you don't have the courage to be honest with each other, how can you, for example, collaborate? I think it's just this personal trait that you treat everyone with respect and you speak up if you have to do what is right for the company as well. Not only what is right for you, so

federica giuseppini 13:29

when you think that's a good environment for you, because your courage is like you you have enough courage to speak up?

Speaker 1 13:38

yeah.

federica giuseppini 13:39

okay. Nice. And, like, if we think of Nordea because we talked about being a you know, a complex organization in some ways, how would you describe the leadership practices under there?

Speaker 1 13:58

I think it's such a huge company. It's like someone say that it's a financial supermarket, a little bit of everything. I think there are lots of different kind of subcultures and different types of leaders given.. given the area. So there is not one for my day seem to be trying to align that and trying to be very clear what is expected from the leader and lots of training for them. But when I talk with graduates different areas, it really does that say think of the seniority of the person, the character of them in but in general, I feel that it's my experiences are very good, very good mutch better leadership that I have experienced in smaller companies, I feel that there is more structure to eat. someone's not doing what they should be doing their processes that you are able to do so that can give some kind of security. I feel.

federica giuseppini 15:04

that's good. And is there something you would change about them?

Speaker 1 15:15

I think it's just poured up to, to have that overall discussion what is what's the role of a leader because people I'm 100% sure they all have different perspectives on that. So I don't know if they how much they talk about it like we did up there or how much Is it like when you become a leader, you get like a little training and then you're on your own. I really don't know how it

works with the leaders but, but I would maybe be here to to like to see in some leaders, you can see this traditional kind of like, top down mentality that they just want to, I don't know, make you do whatever they want and what's best for them. So, just it would be widely acknowledged that what's the purpose of a leader and how we define that Nordea.

federica giuseppini 16:20

That makes sense. But like before, you also mentioned that there are so many like there are different personalities and different figures as like for leader at Nordea so you don't think there is a some common traits in some ways?

Speaker 1 16:39

All the leaders that I have had, they have had but they have in common they have all been very I don't know I have experienced lots of trust from them. And lots of They give me ownership. Even though I'm in a very beginning of my career, I haven't experienced any micromanaging or anything like that. So I feel that what from all the managers I have had at Nordea I have experienced respect. But of course I can also see from anyone who has been my leader, but I have seen with certain people in certain areas is that not everyone is like that and some maybe don't really follow the principles example, their well being at work at all, they just want you to work hard and work your ass off, or that they treat people a little bit differently and they might have some favorites or that they are micromanaging. But I still have they seen or heard a few people like that but if we if the other thing I when I hear from other other like people from different areas it seems that they're pretty pleased with their managers.

federica giuseppini 18:11

Good and can you choose three attributes that a leader should have in your opinion?

Speaker 1 18:23

They should be honest, clear communicator and supportive.

federica giuseppini 18:48

Okay, so, you know honest and supportive is more about the person itself. In some ways uncommunicative could be, you know about skills in that sense. Is that how you like, why did you choose those?

Speaker 1 19:07

I feel like if we begin with the honesty, I think that in a big organization like this, there are lots of politics. The higher you go, the more important there are. So in order that you can do your work, you really need to trust your manager, and to know that they trust you. And of course, the key for that is that you know that they are honest with you, no matter what's going on. So So that's kind of like a building block for trust that is needed for the collaboration with your leader. So that's, that's why I picked that one. good communicator that comes to the you know, what's expected from you. You know, how you're doing if your contribution is, how to be if you're a valued all those things, that it just.. It just makes it possible that you know the expectations, you know the direction, you know how you're doing it. If that doesn't matter, it's just kind of cold. So what's additional harm and misunderstanding some stress. So that's why I picked that one. supportive I think that's especially important in the beginning of the carrier being a graduate that actually that person is someone who is somehow warm and that you get the feeling that they want the best for you. So you can always you don't need to feel stupid if you don't know something that they are supportive and understanding and kind of like they're for you and not against you. So that's the reason for that.

federica giuseppini 20:49

It's really good. And can you choose three attributes that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 20:56

micromanaging? I hate that if someone stalks you and just controls you in. Like for like for things that don't matter, they have a say for everything. They don't give you any independence. It does the opposite of trust that I that really triggers me. I haven't experienced that at Nordea but I have experienced that in my previous job. That's the biggest No, go for me. So that's that's the first one for sure. Leaders leaders should not have... of course, if they are unfair, if the three different team members differently that's that's, that's not right. It just gives. It just creates a lot of tensions in the team. So you have to be very

federica giuseppini 22:00

objective In some ways,

Speaker 1 22:02

yeah, you really need to treat everyone fair. So and the last one would be maybe, if you're selfish, if you just think that everyone is there for you, you make everyone work hard, but you don't ever thank them or you never give them credit. Or if you present the work that someone has done outside you say that you did it and it's not team work.. does not feel that you're a team.

federica giuseppini 22:51

why do you think you pick those that you think that that will make you be, I don't know, less productive or just unhappy or Create, like what kind of environment around you?

Speaker 1 23:03

I think it would definitely create lots of lots of stress, lots of emotional discomfort that can lead to definitely will lead to less productivity. Because the key thing, bit like between one person, a leader and within the whole team dynamics trust is the key thing. And I think all those three aspects that I mentioned are not creating trust, but instead of distrust, and if there is no trust, you don't feel good effort you lose your motivation. Yeah, and when you lose your motivation, how can you be productive?

federica giuseppini 23:49

Right, and can you describe a situation where you have experienced good leadership?

Speaker 1 23:58

like us, basically Kind of like a memory situation?

federica giuseppini 24:02

Yes. Yes. And that can also be like it doesn't necessarily have to be at Nordea because I mean, it's leadership in general, right?

Speaker 1 24:15

I think it is with my current leader as well. When I joined the team, I was both a little bit insecure, and I wasn't sure what I can contribute with. And on the same time, I know this some things in the team that I was just wondering, like, why are we doing it like this? This doesn't seem effective at all. And in the beginning, because I was so insecure, I didn't say anything. But then when the time passed, and I saw that it's actually a team where there is you can everyone can speak their mind. I started to be more vocal about a about the problems that I saw and what we could maybe do about it. And then Instead of making me feel neglected, or that I, you know, turning it in the wrong way against any my leader, instead he say like, okay, but then do you want to take over and start doing this taking the lead of these certain meetings that you're unhappy with. So I believe that was a very good example than turning someone critique into something productive, and also making you more confident by giving you responsibility. So that was a very, very good example of what you actually should do.

federica giuseppini 25:41

mean in that sense somehow, because before you talked about feeling valued, right. So did that make you feel more valuable?

Speaker 1 25:49

Yeah, definitely. I felt that it practice it gives me something that I know that I have contributing with this. It made me feel that my feedback on my opinion is better. Also that he trust that I can do different work, and that I'm not here to take over those things. So it has many aspects that make me feel that I have trusted me and heard.

federica giuseppini 26:15

And that, of course has an impact on your performance. I'm guessing,

Speaker 1 26:18

yes absoulty

federica giuseppini 26:22

Can you describe a situation where you have experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 26:26

Yes, this is from my previous job. I had to begin with that person. It was kind of like, unclear if she was actually my leader or if it was because he was more senior working kind of like with overlapping tests. So we were kind of like working as a pair. But it was obvious because he was much more experienced than I was underneath her. So it was a little bit of a mismatch very unclear. We still need her and love to belong there. But she was very Very micromanaging see was just very I've once when when I was still working with her over and above the study that say of that mistake how this could be in English like that employees feel more -stress week leaders who are kind of like incoherent like that they are more you know you know kind of like unstable but you know that they change a lot, like it's very been praying that the unpredictable is the verb that I'm after. So So employees feel more even more stress if you're in predictable that if you would be just always mean and always treating you bad because then at least it's consistent. So that's exactly exactly what I experienced with this money sure that she was sometimes extremely Trusting extremely caring and nice and other day she could be comfortable work super medically and be like, why did you send that email? Like why did you use that word like now why needs to go after and everything is ruined and she was very dramatic about little things that I used. So that really made me to freeze and little by little I lost my confidence I lost the feeling that I know what's the best. And so I really felt that I cannot do any decisions on my on my own I was crying in the bathroom, I was just it was terrible is a terrible time with her.

federica giuseppini 28:42

And then again, this also reflected on your performance because you just don't feel maybe you know to put hundred percent on yourself in your work and..

Speaker 1 28:50

Absolutely I became more I was just scared to take any action too scared to make decisions. I was of course the productive because everything made, like took so much more time when I needed to just choose my words very carefully. For example, I remember meeting with her manager who was kind of like the owner of the whole company, like I had a meeting with him. So it was, you know, if I get a mandate from him, it should be enough because he's the highest person in the company. But still when he said like, yeah, okay, that sounds good. Do it. And I was like, but I need to talk with this person. And he's like, why do you need an opinion from her for everything. And then I just kind of like realized, where I have ended up, like, so it was really making me less productive and slowing me down in practice.

federica giuseppini 29:44

And so like, before, you mentioned the fact that I'm a leader, when especially for graduates and students, you should be a little bit more supportive in that sense. So you think that there is a certain way to be so you need a certain way to lead you Younger people are like inexperienced people doesn't have to be related to the age but just like I'm experienced people versus someone that that leads normal employees. And that sounds interesting and like on this on this line

Speaker 1 30:17

And there is also one model that I have seen where they kind of like differentiate if you're no novices or advanced beginner and kind of like defend that then you become an expert in kind of like different stages that you go through. And when you are novices, you really want to very clear structures and you really just want to do things write and follow everything, and then become more spontaneous and more trusting your gut feeling and so on. So of course I think as a leader is very different if there is someone who is super confident and know what they're doing and when you to say like, I don't know, just give me some rules and I follow them. So if you need different traits, on leading them.

federica giuseppini 30:58

Okay, interesting. So for you, let's say the the, the attributes that you listed before there would be more beneficial for your personal development and career in some ways.

Speaker 1 31:11

Like, do you mean like compared only if you're at the beginning of your career? Yeah. I think those values that I listed they are they they go for everyone, no matter what kind of seniority level you're leading. That's kind of like the base. But maybe the supporting one that's that's one of those that you need more. Maybe you need a little bit more of it beginners. Let's put it that way. But not to say that I still think that's important no matter who you are leading.

federica giuseppini 31:46

Do you think is a leader? ehmm Because many people could think that, you know, new leaders are likely the first leadership position you have, could be with students or graduates because it's just easier, you know? worked with. And I also got some input like opposite inputs in the sense that you should be very much more experienced to leave graduates and students, what do you think?

Speaker 1 32:12

I think it's definitely the latter one. So I believe that more unexperience people you're leading, the more experienced you have to be. It's subset, kind of like fragile state you are in the beginning of your career. So it defines so much more how you see the company and how you see yourself. So if you have someone who doesn't understand what kind of harm they can do to you if they just do if they're not aware of certain things, I think it should be. You should be very careful when leading people who are in the beginning of their careers get get more support. Also for you. Don't get... the tricky thing because of course you Yeah. How to put it like it's not only about you can be experienced either still suck, and you can be the first time leader and be amazing. So I don't know, maybe the key is that at least when if you start in a position like that you have to be maybe you could get some extra training or something just to make you aware of the pitfalls that you can do. If you're not aware.

federica giuseppini 33:37

that's a that's a very interesting statement. So if you could choose, right, so as a matter like, just some list of topics and you know, skills you could acquire without training, like if you were a

leader, which one like which, which one would you go for which training would you go for, just to make sure you know,

Speaker 1 33:57

if I would Be a leader. Oh, if I okay, so if I would be a leader and I could get any training I wanted, what would it be? Is that what you're asking?

federica giuseppini 34:08

Yes.

Speaker 1 34:09

Yeah, but not in relation to leading someone. The beginning of their career,

federica giuseppini 34:14

you can also make that distinction. Yeah.

Speaker 1 34:17

Okay. But yeah, okay. But if it could be anything, yeah, I, I personally would. It would definitely be something about something about psychology definitely like how people feel free and how you as a leader can be aware of certain things. I don't know more specifically what the area is.. would be. Because I think if you get to that position, you probably have to have some kind of domain knowledge, some Kind of expertise in the area so you already have that but it goes to the people side.

federica giuseppini 35:09

Interesting and like going to into performance, right? So how does your leader assess assess your performance?

Speaker 1 35:20

So, of course at Nordea we set the goals for the whole year in the beginning of the year. And then now they change that you don't need to have a discussion every quarter. It's all at the end of the year, but in in my team, we have agreed that we will have a quarter based discussion. So pretty much there's this official way of giving feedback having a session. But we also with my leader we have we meet every second week and we just it's a possibility for me to talk about anything that I want to talk about. So then he normally doesn't give me feedback. If I don't ask normally, especially the beginning, I always was asking, like, Is there anything I could do better? Or am I doing it was kind of like that I'm more I was more insecure. So I wanted more feedback. But then when he always, you know, was honest, I'm not saying what I'm doing well, as actually never said anything that I do even better that there is something missing. It's more like very practice. oriented, like, so. Yeah. So then I started to trust more that if I do something that I shouldn't be doing.

federica giuseppini 36:44

So you have because you're the quarterly meeting would be the plds. Right? Yeah. Okay. And do you feel this this kind of evaluation reflects reality?

Speaker 1 37:00

They're like in. In my team, we don't have any metrics of such data, for example, we should produce certain artifacts every quarter or anything like that. So it's more these kind of directions. And so they are a little bit more how to say intangible in that sense. So it's not like, I don't see we get the help got lots of kind of like feedback on my performance or that evaluation would be based on any anything like quantitative is more like, I don't know. I don't know how to put it. It feels like it's a lot about self development at the moment. So it's not like emulated by

Doing good or bad? It's more about, you know, talking what it should be for me and how he can, how my manager can support it. I don't know if I answered your question. I don't know.

federica giuseppini 38:11

I mean, that's how you feel that your assessment goes, you know, that's the important part. Because I mean, sometimes when I was talking to the students that it would be like, Hey there, this pod, so you gathered the feedback from the stakeholders, and then you know, your leader reads about them, and then kind of discuss with them and then with you and then if there is a match, then Okay, and if there is a mismatch, then there's something to talk about. But it's also about like you said, more like abstract factors. Yeah. Yeah. And if you could change something about this, what would you change?

Speaker 1 38:50

about this evolution? I, for myself, I kind of like have a person that actually would really enjoy to have some metrics, some more tangible goals. Like if I do this, if I perform this way I know that I have reached the goals that are there for me. But I also understand that the area that I'm working is very kind of like experts in the area. So it's not very day to day processes that we're working with that you can just make sure that home any whatsoever you do, then you're fine or homeless, you as a salesperson are able to sell the then you're safe. So I understand that because it's the kind of like start to dictate that. Remember Looking at the so much just understanding the organization and building good network with stakeholders being a team member and learning about business and technology and all that so you cannot really measure it. So I know that in this case it cannot be measured, but I still would need something that I can follow myself how I'm doing and assess myself.

federica giuseppini 40:28

Okay, interesting. All right. And if you were the leader, disciplined leader, how would you evaluate your employees then?

Speaker 1 40:42

That's a good question. I think in the my thinking For me, it's very important that if you commit to something you deliver. And of course, if there is a reason, then you cannot. But something about because what I experienced in my team right now is that in the beginning of the quarter, we come in to certain things that they will be submitted at the end of the quarter. But then when we go closer to the deadline exists, like, oh, then there are lots of reasons why we cannot do that. And I think they often they definitely are valid reasons. But at the same time, sometimes I feel like it should be more strict. So maybe, maybe I would be a terrible leader if I was the leader. Just I don't know but I think it's, it's, it creates safe because you know what's expected from you and then You're also elevated based on that account.

federica giuseppini 42:08

And do you think it's because you know, like people, maybe even yourself when you work, you would want metrics just to know how you're doing in the progress because since you're not as experienced, yeah, that you might just want to know, you know if it's going good or if it's going bad because you don't really have some kind of way to evaluate yourself?

Speaker 1 42:30

exactly, I think that's exactly, exactly the point. So, also, that it's not only with kind of like unexperienced employees also you can be very, very expert at like very high levels of expertise in certain area. But then if you're not sure how you are evaluated and what is enough, I think it can create uncertainty and that also can create a feeling that Get the credit when it makes sense.

federica giuseppini 43:11

Interesting. And if Still, if you were a leader, how would you motivate your employees?

Speaker 1 43:17

I would definitely like to know what their personal motivations are incentives are what drives them, what they because some are more kind of like external motivated, they want praise they want. And of course, not everyone's aware of that, but you can at a certain time, you can see that some people to really like to get credit that they like to be seen and those kind of things, motivate them or for other people is for the data really want as much independence as possible. And they don't want you to tell what to do. So I think it really depends on a person. But so as a leader I'm definitely just Set the direction and be clear what we have to do and why we have to do it, but then give people enough space to do it in their own way, I would guess.

federica giuseppini 44:15

quite difficult balance to achieve. Definitely. All right, and some just some background question. Um, so, since these are studies of generation as well, can I ask you How old are you?

Speaker 1 44:30

I'm 28.

federica giuseppini 44:31

Okay. And you studied? Yeah.

Speaker 1 44:38

I studied IT - digital innovation and management.

federica giuseppini 44:42

Okay. And what's your position in the organization right now?

Speaker 1 44:50

enterprise architecture.

federica giuseppini 44:52

Okay. And do you think is there something I should have asked about leadership or you really wanted out me about leadership? something You would like to know

Speaker 1 45:09

Yeah, I think I'm very interested in kind of like what traditionally considered as a good leader that that's very It's about gender like if you're a man or if you're a woman it's more about what is considered masculine and what is considered feminine and I see a shift there. The traditionally it's been like that if you're kind of like hard both a person and kind of like overrule people, that's a good manager who just steps up and somehow says like, free from emotions and just like execute, but I can now see that there is much more space and discussion about, about emotions at work and how you can be Good leader at the same time. You know that as a leader, you can have emotions and you can show emotion that you can allow people to be real people and more authentic. So I think that's for me very interesting when it comes to leadership and how, especially being a young woman, and some of the characters associated with being a young woman like that, you know, that you're taking more seriously if you're just kind of like this toxic young man, instead of being a kind of like a more vulnerable and open and emotional, young woman kind of so I find it very interestin how there is there is a shift but it's it's taking time. And I really hate also when talking about hard skills and soft skills and all these things that I'm talking about that they are considered soft, like I think core like we are all humans, and that's the core for us. So that's what I want to say about leadership.

federica giuseppini 47:03

Now but that's great because that's what I'm also is trying to do not about being just this female or you know, feminine or masculine color, but it's more like giving a little bit of a structure to leadership. Because I feel like many people think the same but then they are country, the country like in contradicting what what they feel. So it's very interesting. And that's exactly why I'm focusing on generations but it's just because I've noticed that there is such a huge gap.

Speaker 1 47:37

Yeah, that's that's super interesting, I guess. And like I said, For me, it's also it's not a gender issue. Like I said, the best example of a leader. That's that's acceptable is a woman so it has nothing to do with injuries.

federica giuseppini 47:56

All right, and if I can't, there's one last step. If like, you can help me, I'm going to say Your second survey which is this fastest the first and very similar and then I promise you're done and I have to say like thank you so so so so much. I mean I randomly met you and then I was like, please help me and then you said yes and I really appreciate it. Of course

Speaker 1 48:16

I hope that they help or any sense that I said..

federica giuseppini 48:25

definitely a lot, a lot a lot a lot. I'm hoping 15 or 20 some going into considering I'm doing it myself, so it's so far you are this seventh or the eighth. So I'm slowly getting there.

Speaker 1 48:49

But let me know if you need any help or like some kind of like specific type of interview so I can also think if I if I know someone who do who would be

federica giuseppini 48:59

a good Yeah, I think I will probably contact you because now next week I should interview two more graduates. And then I interviewed for students and for graduates, if I answer me and then I interviewed a head of students ahead of graduates, she was amazing. And I'm gonna try to interview or not ahead of graduates next week when he has been pushing me for like the past two weeks. And then after that, I have to go one level up. Yeah, so maybe then I will definitely take up your help.

Speaker 1 49:32

Yeah, are you also gonna so are you gonna interview leaders or just kind of like,

federica giuseppini 49:38

Yeah, I am. I am. So you know, head of students is the leader and to handle graduates, but I'm doing more like for each leader, I'm trying to have at least three employees. So I'm trying to give a balance because still like those, those people like if, if you're a leader, you're also an employee. So your boss and then our experience Or like maybe your insights that you need more insights from not experienced people. I'm trying to build up this triangle, right. It's like for each boss then few employees. But yeah.

Speaker 1 50:17

Yeah, let me know if there's anything I can help you with.

federica giuseppini 50:21

Thank you so much rose. I hope you have a great weekend.

Speaker 1 50:25

Enjoy the weekend.

9.1.14 Interview with Robert

Fri, 4/17 10:17AM • 39:00

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

graduates, leader, leadership, employees, work, sense, learning, organization, person, support, hierarchy, give, empowerment, organisation, managers, talking, development, develop, layers, tasks

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:00

Great. So, okay, I'm gonna get started with a few questions.

Speaker 1 00:10

Can I have a little bit of background on your writing?

federica giuseppini 00:13

Of course. So I'm writing about leadership, I want to understand a little bit more the perception of leadership among generations. And I chose to, I chose to focus my study on Nordea because of the high hierarchical structure that there is that it could somehow get in the way of the like some of the most modern leadership styles in some ways. So I just want to see if there is a match on how young people there think and how the leaders perceive their employees. So it's something like this

Speaker 1 00:56

and then you're out. Interviewing leaders ?

federica giuseppini 01:01

So, exactly. So I started from the students, and I interviewed leaders of students, and graduates and leaders of graduates is going to be what I was to have you two heads. And then I interviewed about five graduates. So it's really nice. And then next step, I have interviews we know you know, like some of the people that set up this leadership training at Nordea. And then some mortar full time employees just to get you know, a little bit of a random sample about ages and experience levels and might also affect the perception of leadership. Yeah. It's your first experience as a leader?

Speaker 1 01:49

Yes it is and I've not been there for too long. I started first of January.

federica giuseppini 01:57

So were you at Nordea before?

Speaker 1 02:01

I actually started there as a graduate myself in 2013 and I have been in different positions around the bank

federica giuseppini 02:15

How did your working life change from being an employee to a leader?

Speaker 1 02:20

Ehmmm how it changed.. it changed in a way that you are not only accountable for yourself you have to support and guide and to motivate a group of people and be there for them while also doing a lot of still continuing doing work work on your own side. So, in the survey, I just answered that a lot of my time is actually still on, on on tasks also. So, so changing the way that I have to set up my day in a way that I can I can be there for them as well and not only focus on doing my own tasks

federica giuseppini 03:12

but so how because I didn't see the the survey yet. So how would you split your time between individual work in the you know, guiding and motivating and focusing on the graduates

Speaker 1 03:23

so I put in a 60/40. 40 on multitasking 60 on being a leader for the graduates

federica giuseppini 03:36

okay. do you think that's enough to follow the graduates you have?

Speaker 1 03:42

in the way we have set it up. Yes, it is. I am not say that there are daily leader or support because they out on rotation around the organization. So, wherever they are on rotation they have a manager who will support them. So, so, my my job is more on on ensuring that they are in a good place and organization that they are happy that they get treated the right way by by wherever they are and then then coach them and help them develop the first year in the organisation.

federica giuseppini 04:31

Okay. So would you say that the, you know, this rotation managers they follow more a day to day approach with the graduates and more like a professional growth in that sense.

Speaker 1 04:45

They definitely have a more of a professional support and daily work support and developing in that way yes.

federica giuseppini 04:59

interesting So before you started your leadership career, let's say is, what were you looking forward?

Speaker 1 05:10

What I was looking after in the job? sorry, I'm not sure I fully understand that.

federica giuseppini 05:24

Of course, what were you looking forward in the sense that what, you know, what were you dreaming about this new job? What were your hopes and like, you know, changing between being an employee to, to a leader of some some graduates, what were you? Yeah. So looking forward?

Speaker 1 05:47

what to be able to give some of our new people who really could start in the organization and actually give some of my own experience To be able to support them in that way and then motivate them and develop them that I find really interesting. ensuring that they, they get off really good and learn a lot in the first couple of years here in the organization. Some of the main

paths within within this leadership is to support in a way I can develop them and I can help them achieve what they what they would like and learn them about the organisation.

federica giuseppini 06:42

Okay, that's great. And is there something you were afraid of before starting?

Speaker 1 06:54

Definitely afraid of if I had enough to give or knew enough to support them and be there In the way they would like me in regards to development adn learning for sure.

federica giuseppini 07:12

and can you describe a situation where you think you have demonstrated to be a good leader?

Speaker 1 07:19

Think I at least some of them have told me that I give them give them some good advice and guidance. In regard some of them are looking for for new positions. So So what how to better understanding of where they want to go and and what they would like to work on and so with developing and coaching and guidance in finding the first position, sort to say.

federica giuseppini 07:52

So, it's more like if, because the graduates are going to start because you have to look for Well, you don't have to look for a full time position they should get offered by one of their managers rotation managers?

Speaker 1 08:04

Ehmm not necessarily. They actually when they're done with the graduate period, they are supposed to look for a permanent position you can call it themselves. So they also reach out to different people to see if there's a place for them and also we are also doing whatever we can from the management group in order to support them of course. But but it is we work with this guideline like take responsibility for your own development and this is part of it.

federica giuseppini 08:42

But you just guide them to make a decision.

Speaker 1 08:46

Yeah I guide them and then support them in regards to getting more specific and clear on what exactly it is that they are they are looking for. When they when they approach also, who didn't should approach and then when they approach them what they can what they can tell them that they ask.

federica giuseppini 09:06

Okay, and I'm guessing that you take a deeper look for each individual to graduating and you consider more things right. So each one is different. So I guess they're developing in very different ways?

09:19

Definitely, then they also come with different backgrounds, technical background, economic background or yeah...

federica giuseppini 09:32

So how do you think you're matching them? Well, in some ways we'd like future job opportunities like what do you what do you look at?

Speaker 1 09:42

what I what I offer is most most challenging them and getting them to be more specific and those my own background is also economic. So in regards to them, I can I can give a bit more and then my own journey with The bank has also more similar to those who have that interest. So, but in general what I bring is to challenge them and give them to think about what exactly is... a good examples that that some of them say that I would like to do project management but what is project management there's a lot of different definitions of it and then a lot of different elements. So for them to be more specific and then and clear what it is they they want to go after. Definitely also will supportem in learning the most.

federica giuseppini 10:41

Okay, so from what I understand you try to give them as much space as possible to make their own decisions, but just, you know, just just keep them towards like keep them in a path in that sense

Speaker 1 10:56

Yeah that is at least my ambition ahah.

federica giuseppini 11:00

Okay, and talking about leadership in general. So how would you define the role of a leader?

Speaker 1 11:12

Interesting question. I would say for me, what a good leader for me in my mind is that it's a person that empower and, and guide and are there for, for whenever an employee has a need for support. And then there's also a person that is able to be the layer between the top management and the employees. So So, so he's kind of like filter. Meaning that what gets to the employees is only what's necessary for them to do their job. And then whatever noise there might be that's, that's caused by that person.

federica giuseppini 12:02

So just to ensure that they do a good, good work and they get the, because I feel like talking to some people in the organization, it's really interesting because they many of them talked about this noise they use this term, right? So it feels like let's say you have some you select the information that you you know, that you present to your employees because sometimes could get in the way of their job in that sense,

Speaker 1 12:35

Yeah it's just not relevant... maybe.

federica giuseppini 12:40

Not Yeah, makes perfect sense. But do you think they get these restrictions in some ways get in the way of your leadership approach style or the goals you want to achieve as a leader. So the the fact that you Select, let's say this information to share in some ways just to ensure them to do a good work and not to worry about, you know, again this noise does it get in the way of the leadership you want to.. the approach that you want to be the leader you want to be in that sense?

Speaker 1 13:20

if that effect it..? mmmh No, I wouldn't say so cuse for me it's part of the job to be that filler, so I wouldn't say that it's affecting me in that way.

federica giuseppini 13:41

Yes, very. Okay. Perfect. And how if we talk about this ideal leader, like the perfect leader, how would collaboration look like with this person? For you?

Speaker 1 13:57

For me, perfectly nice. A person, but I'm also striving for myself as a person that I can, can can bounce things off with. So inspiring(?) is a really important thing and empowers me. And that gives me space to operate within. But I know that that person will always support me if I go to him or if I try my situation where I need.

federica giuseppini 14:27

Okay, so you would need like talking about like, day by day, like the only collaboration. So you would just have to feel that this person is, let's say putting in the best possible position but yet, you know, open maybe open conversations and how would like I would if, like, if you think about like a day, you know, with this with your perfect leader, like, you know, how would it look like how would you approach him? How would you have to feel or Let's say.. I don't know feel comfortable to do things.

Speaker 1 15:08

open conversation and honesty is definitely elements that should be there.. my daily work if everything's running perfectly there's also a person that I don't necessarily see if everything is good and just just running. So, so so for me a good leader is there if I need to support and guidance maybe in situations where I haven't been before, or where I'm in doubt how to how to handle it.

federica giuseppini 15:56

That's that's good. And talking about Nordea's values If I'm not mistaken collaboration, ownership, passion and courage What did they mean to you? And how do you think those values relate to your leadership style?

Speaker 1 16:15

what they mean to me is that we do our best and make make the best for our customers in the in the right way. That's kind of like some some set up and then for me in what I do... Of course, I need to take ownership of my own stuff, but that's also something that I try to to get the graduates to do so so that's something like this. Back to taking taking ownership of your own development for example. Collaboration is this is this about and I was mentioned earlier that we are a big company with a lot of layers, so collaboration across the bank is not always easy. And that's something that I definitely work towards. And then also trying to teach to to the graduates to pursue to walk your way and try to achieve what what you what you would like to do. So I definitely think we fit into a lot of things yeah.

federica giuseppini 17:45

Okay. And do you think is there is one of this four values the best relates to the definition of your leadership, or something one of those values that you feel like you use the most in some ways in your day to day approach?

Speaker 1 18:18

empowerment is something that I definitely try to use in everyday but but also it's something I try to teach them and to learn from from my own experiences this ownership thing I would say then.

federica giuseppini 18:38

Okay, that's good and talking about leadership within Nordea how would you describe the practices How would you describe the leadership structure?

Speaker 1 18:55

definitely differs from from different parts of the organization. But also you have quite quite a few layers so it's the hierarchy is steep my mind and then there's also differs from from country

to country depending on the culture in some of the countries they are really looking at this hierarchy so so unless you come with stars and shoulders sort to say you don't you don't get things and in Denmark we are a bit more open and speaking honesty to the different management layers in other countries but but definitely a deep organization with with with a few few more management layers that needed I would say.

federica giuseppini 20:06

So what would you change? If you could?

Speaker 1 20:12

I would try to make it a flat organization so shorter to, if you can call it the top and I would empower the people that are doing the work.

federica giuseppini 20:33

This being your first leadership position. Is there something you wish you had known before starting? about leading other people?

Speaker 1 20:42

Mhhh I was quite aware of the things that I needed to learn along the way that wouldn't have been able to be there beforehand. So so that's That's not... actually don't don't have something less I said that's how you do some of the boring administration stuff. That's the only places where I've been surprised. In the other areas or elements I was quite aware of that. It's a it's a learning process.

federica giuseppini 21:38

And so you said before you said the word you were aware of things, right. So is it because you were a graduate yourself? You think?

Speaker 1 21:49

I was a graduate myself but also, of course, before taking this talk to a lot of my colleagues who are or have been leaders so To get an understanding of what what it is and what it's what's what's what what you are supposed to bring, or expected to bring.

federica giuseppini 22:15

That's good. Was there like a very good advice that you remember?

Speaker 1 22:34

To remember to use your own experience. I don't remember who told me that but That's something I have done more than I actually expected it to be possible.

federica giuseppini 22:52

Okay, so in some ways, in some ways, let's say creating this connection between the graduates So putting yourself in their shoes and make them understand that you kind of understand where they're coming from.

Speaker 1 23:08

Give them guidance in the journey they are just started on.

federica giuseppini 23:13

Okay. That's very interesting. Um, so what is the biggest challenge you have faced in leading people?

Speaker 1 23:24

making everyone happy. Yeah. ahah

federica giuseppini 23:28

Makes sense. Cuz it's a lot of personalities. I mean, how many graduates Do you follow?

Speaker 1 23:34

I have 16.

federica giuseppini 23:35

Wow, that's a lot.

Speaker 1 23:37

Yeah ahah

federica giuseppini 23:39

okay. And how do you feel about this now maybe, you know with time and gets better.

Speaker 1 23:48

It's actually a fair fair amount that we have set up because I don't have the daily. I don't have them on a daily basis. So so in that way, it's, I have time to do all my own tasks which also were quite important for me when when taking this in this way I can keep up with what's going on in the organization.

federica giuseppini 24:18

so do you think you could follow more people?

Speaker 1 24:23

It could be possible but I think we are at a fair point now.

federica giuseppini 24:33

Okay. And can you choose three adjectives, three attributes that a leader should have?

Speaker 1 24:46

Based on your list the survey or..?

federica giuseppini 24:50

Anything.

Speaker 1 24:54

I would say empowerment, Empathy and mm.. there are a lot of things that I want to pick ehmm and being able ehmm I don't know how to say that as a word but being able to support and guide and coach so whatever we call it, employees development and learning.

federica giuseppini 25:58

Okay, I have a question so I understand the values you chose because we talked about you know, your ideal leader and how you see, you know, you wish to be in some sense and but do you think that you chose these values? Also because you're following the graduates so that maybe there might be needing more leading and more learning and empowerment in the sense?

Speaker 1 26:21

that might be that my focus is on that but I would say that in any state an employees is in.. there should be an interest to to learn and develop.

federica giuseppini 26:40

Okay. And can you choose three attributes that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 26:56

For me, I guess I have a control freak. If you can call it that. And not have this.. ehm this

federica giuseppini 27:14

maybe would be micromanaging ?

Speaker 1 27:17

micromanagement yeah but Also, this is the opposite of empowerment I'm not sure how to put it in but but more this old kind of way of being a leader, you know, you dictate what your employees are to do. if that makes sense.

federica giuseppini 27:56

Yeah. So more you don't give them the freedom do their own..

Speaker 1 28:03

yeah.

federica giuseppini 28:05

Is it because you see that as a learning or?

Speaker 1 28:10

No no I have just experienced something ehmm something like that during my career and it's... I don't I don't see that in any way giving good results or being a good approach. And I don't like that for myself.

federica giuseppini 28:37

Now we have, let's say, out of these three attributes, we have micromanaging and the opposite of empowering, whatever that is and then can you give me a third?

Speaker 1 29:08

should be it's again it's but the opposite of present. So a manager should always be able to possible to reach for his employees so not present.. not present.

federica giuseppini 29:25

Interesting and maybe you might have started to say something about this one my next question next question would have been describe a situation where you have experienced bad leadership? Can you give me a good example? Like an actual situation.

Speaker 1 29:44

Yeah, but it's been like this would you if you using your your power of ehmm In a situation where you put it into say that you can shut down a initiative that is running just simply because you don't like the person who was supposed to do it or you can also say that you actually use your power to get a person pushed out of the organization simply due to personal reasons that that's definitely a bad leadership position for me. So do this with the with the hierarchy I think.. the more hierarchy the more people can feel that they are sitting on top in a power position and use it in a bad way.

federica giuseppini 30:46

But can you give me like an actual situation like describing a situation where you have experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 31:08

Not sure if I have a specific one.. I had a colleague of mine who was at some point forced out of bank cause he was it was not possible for him to take a step off of the curb sort to say in his development and learning due to some personal reasons with with people higher up.

federica giuseppini 31:42
Okay, so what what happened?

Speaker 1 31:44
He just, he left the bank.

federica giuseppini 31:47
Okay. So let's say he wanted to get better and this was...

Speaker 1 31:53
He wanted to take a position that was the next step for him in his in his development that was not possible here he definitely had the skills and experience and whatever is needed but but he was simply pushed away by by some people higher up the organisation.

federica giuseppini 32:22
okay.. all right and what do you think of this do you think it's... I don't know something.. why do you think that happened?

Speaker 1 32:38
I don't know the personal reasons to be honest. But so what happens is that's the person was also put in a position where he no way could could develop himself more and That's, for me, that's definitely the wrong way to use the power you have as a manager high up.

federica giuseppini 33:19
before we talked about this, again, the the opposite of empowering, right? That you felt that some times maybe with some of your managers or leaders..

Speaker 1 33:35
I haven't experienced it with my own my own leader so, so that way I haven't feel it on myself.

federica giuseppini 33:46
Okay. And can you describe a situation where you have experience good leadership?

Speaker 1 33:56
That I can I can do that a couple of the leaders have had more Actually but but it is this empowerment and then giving have been given space to work within. So as long as I've done my job and fulfilled my tasks, I've had the freedom to vote in the way that fits me that I have experienced a couple of places in the organisation.

federica giuseppini 34:28
So, we can either meet like a very specific like really just describe what happened or what project you were working in and what the leader did to make you feel that way?

Speaker 1 34:45
I don't know if I have such as such as a specific situation for us, it's been there the whole time. I don't know if I have just a specific situation or so to to to tell Because it's something that is there and something that I have learned that that that needs to be there for me otherwise I can't deliver my best so I'm not sure I have a specific situation so to say but but it is for me this was this I have the freedom to operate within and I do my tasks into my work to if I stumble upon something for example, it's been that I had some difficult project people at some points they

were a lot about this with the hierarchy. So so to me that having the status was quite early in my my careers. Due to me not having the stars on the shoulders I was not able to actually push them or put up with the situation. the way that we could get done the work we should have. So yeah, I had to bring in my mentors and get their sparing an idea as to how to solve this. So he supported me he helped me.. we solved it, then that was it. I was back to my job again. So So That's what I experienced.

federica giuseppini 36:32

That's good. All right, and that's some background info before we, we finish this interview. This is a study of generations. Is it okay if I asked you how old are you? I'm 33. Okay. And so what's your title in the organization?

Speaker 1 36:56

It's head of technology talents.

federica giuseppini 37:02

Okay, and are you are you Danish?

Speaker 1 37:06

Yeah I am.

federica giuseppini 37:11

Okay, right now two more things. I'm going to send you the link to a second survey, which is kind of the same as the first one, and he's gonna take maybe maximum three minutes to do. So quick. And then my last question is, do you think is there something I should have asked about leadership that you're like, Hey, I mean, as a leader, I do this and you haven't asked me about it.. Or something to share, or even something that you would like to know about leading graduates or whatever

Speaker 1 37:43

well interest in hearing what they told you ahah just kidding. I think you'll have some pretty good questions.

federica giuseppini 38:04

Do you think there is something that affects your leading that I haven't asked you? Or is it just about your organization and the people you lead or what else?

Speaker 1 38:26

No.. it should have been something like this? How does the organization affect the way you lead?

federica giuseppini 38:45

I think that's why I tried to ask about the values because I want to ask too direct in that sense. That's fine. Okay, no, that's good.

9.1.15 Interview with Sara

Fri, 4/17 10:18AM • 41:16

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

leader, manager, people, ownership, knowledge, problem, position, bit, challenged, leadership, question, team members, guess, feel, important, good, thought, general, job, pushing

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:27

Let me give you a short background. So I went on exchange to China last semester. And I took a course in leadership where they started describing the differences between you know, what's the leader, what's the manager. Then I also took another class, which is knowledge management. And it's more about the sharing of the knowledge. And just so I tried to combine ish this to, to come up with a topic. And so I did. And so I decided to study leadership, but in regards to generations, so if there is any difference between the generations, how they perceive the leaders, what they want from them, is it better generations to work together better leadership styles that would work for generations, something like this. So my questions are going to be very broad, and just very, you know, very general. Let's see.

Speaker 1 01:45

All right. That's a very interesting topic, though. And, I mean, you probably find the difference between generations and their preferences. I guess.

federica giuseppini 01:57

It's really interesting. I can give you some insights after the interview. I'm gonna prepare a small briefing for all the people that participated. All right. Um, so I'm gonna start with a few questions. Um, so you are graduate right now?

Speaker 1 02:28

No I am full time.

federica giuseppini 02:32

So you've been from student to full time.

Speaker 1 02:35

Yeah.

federica giuseppini 02:36

Perfect. Do you remember when you go for the position?

Speaker 1 02:40

Yes.

federica giuseppini 02:41

Can you tell me a little bit about it?

Speaker 1 02:47

Okay, but this actually has to be confidential then?

federica giuseppini 02:50

Of course.

Speaker 1 02:53

Well, I was a student in one department that I was Hoping to continue working in or I don't know, but I was expecting to continue to work there. And so I was the plan was that I was graduating in late May, June. And so I had this Model United Nations workshop in New York that I wanted to go to that I was going to in April. And that was for two and a half weeks. So I was I had to talk to my manager and bring up the subject because at that point, they hadn't really brought it up. And I was like, well, I kind of need to know if I should search for a new job or if I

will be offered a position. And the reason why I started in that department was because they told me that there was a high chance it was highly implied that I would get a position there. So when I wanted a more official statement, it was right after The organization that had gone through organizational changes, so they were a bit more hesitant and they're like, honestly, I don't really know what to tell you. It's just a really big mess right now. And I, I was like, Well, you know, if you want me here, you kind of have to fight for me. I know that anything can happen here because I've been here for three and a half, three years so at that point. So I and I also said, If you can't offer me a position, then I would use my contacts and look for something else because I'm graduating, this is pressure enough. And it's really important that I have a job after graduation so. So yeah, they couldn't really give me a certain answer. So I did activate my network, sort say and then I talked to other people and they told me that there's this unit that's actually building up right now and they are looking for people. So I started interviewing, I spoke to the manager in that unit. And I actually really liked him. And also the word seem pretty interesting because before I was in compliance, and that that one was operational risk, and there have been different, like risk is, in my opinion, a bit more exciting. So at that point, I didn't know but it seemed more exciting. So I started interviewing for that position, I got.. so I had to do like a couple of rounds, maybe three or four, with different people and at the end I was offered a job and I just accepted it because I really wanted it. And then I went back to tell my current manager and the previous unit, and that's when the drama kind of started. So they were like, oh, why didn't you tell us and then his manager came to me and he basically told me that they would meet any offer that I have been offered from the other unit to keep me and I was like, That's really nice, and I appreciate it. But I've already accepted. And they were very offended that I didn't come to them before I officially accepted, which was making a statement that I didn't even consider. But I think that my managers manager didn't know how long I have pushed for this. And he was either playing that he didn't know but all of a sudden, it became very easy to hire me. So yeah, I think for me, it was the right decision. And I was actually lucky India that it was like that, but there was a lot of drama on that. I mean, everything that I just said that was at least a month of back and forth. And so I hope that makes sense. Yeah. I love it because it was an open, you know, intro question to start a conversation. I love this.

federica giuseppini 07:02

But how did you feel? I mean, that must come in in, in this situation was like three leaders were involved or..

Speaker 1 07:11

Yeah at least three leaders Yeah...

federica giuseppini 07:16

I mean also your your old boss and then her his whatever previous manager.

Speaker 1 07:22

Exactly.

federica giuseppini 07:24

It seems chaotic to me.

Speaker 1 07:26

It was it was very dramatic because I was also writing my thesis at that point then it was a big decision to decide where to start a job and I Oh, I just thought it would be more straightforward, but of course, I mean, it's, I should have figured out that it wouldn't be that easy. But I think in the end, it was just it led to the right decision. I'm actually really happy that I moved. But it was the lack of security at the end that I was missing because had started the job with the thought of, okay, there's a high percentage like very high percentage that I would get a job here. And I think in the end, I would have gotten one but I just wasn't okay with not knowing. And I didn't want to

graduate and to have to look for a job without when I had been at the company for three years. I thought I was just like, I've been here long enough like you need to fight for me. I mean, maybe it was a bit. No, I thought it was fair.

federica giuseppini 08:33

Yeah, I mean, if you didn't feel it, probably you didn't even feel valued at the point because you've been there for such a long time. You've done so much for the company even..

Speaker 1 08:42

yeah, but but it was a bit tricky because at that current department, I had only been there for a couple of months. So it's kind of fair enough because you don't know me that well, but you still know me enough to know if you should fight work you're not otherwise I know enough people to at least talk to them about another job. which what happened in the end. So, so yes, I was lucky that I knew people as well.

federica giuseppini 09:08

Okay, that's good. As long as you feel good in your position now, I mean, that's good. okay. Um, can you tell me a time where you felt most appreciated and rewarded by one of your leaders?

Speaker 1 09:27

Can you repeat the question?

federica giuseppini 09:28

Yes, of course. So can you tell me of an example like a real life situation where you felt most valued and appreciated by your leader, one of them?

Speaker 1 09:42

I guess that's a can't really come up with a certain, like a specific example. But I think, or something that's that memorable. But I think that there were a lot of situations where if I had a good manager, they knew how to support me and maybe Especially in my new position because I entered a very unknown field. For me, it was very new. And from the beginning, I was given, you know, real tasks and projects and things to do. So I was very insecure and uncertain of what I was doing because it was new. And I, I didn't know anything, like most of the time, I just, I had to read so many documents and pages just to know what I was about to do kind of. So my manager was really supportive throughout that process. But in the end, also when I finished the project, so to say, he kept saying every time that I had done a great job, and he appreciates a lot that I'm on the team, and even though I'm the most junior one, he still thinks that I'm a valuable team member and I did a great job blah, blah and so on. So I think when I felt that insecure in what I was doing, it was really good. Get that validation. So to say that someone was saying, Yeah, you are on the right track, and this is what it's supposed to look like. You're doing a great job.

federica giuseppini 11:12

Good. And can you remember any time when your age played a role?

Speaker 1 11:22

I think that can be both negative and positive. So I'm older than other people who are because I have a couple of indications and I have worked in between. So when I was starting my job, I was actually when I started this job, I was 31 as opposed to someone who maybe just graduated their first master's and they were like 20 something. So I think that I kind of used it when I negotiated my salary because I just said that I would expect to be paid fairly. And I don't know, I, I can't remember how I phrased it, but I just mentioned because I think that and then that's the negative part. And it's, a lot of times people kind of underestimate your knowledge and abilities when you're younger. And I think that, I mean, I've been told that I look younger than I am. So

people just assume that, especially in a bank, where it's a man dominated, sphere and age plays a role. So when people see you, they they kind of jumped to conclusions of how much maybe, you know, not everyone, but I have experienced that a lot of times. So I think a lot of times I have to either throw in a sentence that I'm a bit older than I look or I have to throw in people's faces. My knowledge or I have to be a bit more aggressive when expressing it. So I think that it can play a role in both ways. But yeah, I guess anybody can be a good thing. Yeah, that's my personal experience at least. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 13:19

Okay. That's good. And talking a little bit more about leadership in general. How would you define the role of a leader who is a leader to you?

Speaker 1 13:37

a leader should be someone who has the knowledge and the people skills to guide you in your work. So it's not just someone who knows everything about the field that I work in, but they need to have the people skills to To guide me and to to guide me through my development, I would say because I think a lot of times what I've seen is that manager and leaders are two things that are kind of different, but they are confused and people who are just really good at what they do. They become managers, but they're not very good leaders, because they lack certain people skills. And and I think that that's the pattern that reoccurs quite often. So yeah, I don't know if I answered your question. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 14:42

Like I said, it's pretty general. So whatever comes to your mind helps me with my research.

Speaker 1 14:47

Yeah.

federica giuseppini 14:48

and if we talk about this ideal leader, the perfect leader, right? how does collaboration look like with this person?

Speaker 1 14:58

And I would say it's someone who definitely doesn't micromanage me and has trust that I would do what I'm supposed to do or what we have laid out in the plan that I'm going to do. I like to be pushed sometimes. So I like when I'm being challenged. So I like it when my manager asked me challenging questions or when I'm, I don't really know them or he makes me think on the spot, which is very nerve wracking, but it's also challenging. So, yeah, I think it's a combination of being supported but being challenged, so that it's kind of keeping it interesting and definitely not micromanaged. And you know, someone who's also empathetic and understanding

federica giuseppini 15:59

That makes sense, it's really good and if we talk about Nordea's values, so passion, courage, ownership and collaboration. Do you see what did that mean to you? Do you see one of those values that you use the most in your day to day work?

Speaker 1 16:24

Me personally or people who I work with. I think that it just the reason why I asked is that when we talk about our data values, there's one pattern that we everyone talks about, and it just comes up right away and it's just that no one really wants to take ownership on anything. So everyone wants to be a leader and to be responsible for something but no one really wants to take ownership. So I think that That's a very common problem. Um, and yeah, me I don't know, I think I'm pretty. I could be passionate about my work and that kind of shows otherwise, what were they? Oh, courage? Yeah. I'd say that something that. I also call I think...

federica giuseppini 17:34

there is no right or wrong. I've heard them all. Some people couldn't even name them, so it's fine. And some people live for them.

Speaker 1 17:42

So it's no I've just had that conversation so many times, and I have them in all my PLDs and I always just think about it. Pretty sure that every time I provide a different answer, so if it's something important for your research, then I could think more about was not my favorite thing.

federica giuseppini 18:03

It makes sense. But you can also see that and you can tell me why you would you change them? Or is it above values in general that you don't believe in? Or what do you think?

Speaker 1 18:19

No, I think it's great to have them. It's just a bit. Sometimes it feels worse that you have to connect to each value or to kind of explain how you've connected to or how you've used every value in order to complete your work and so on. So that sometimes feels a bit forced, but at the same time, I've always been able to give an answer.

federica giuseppini 18:44

So yeah, that's a good, that's a good answer. And so if we still talk about Nordea, how would you define the leadership practices?

Speaker 1 19:03

Ahhh.. in what way?

federica giuseppini 19:07

that's the thing any way that comes to your mind so anything when you talk when you think about leadership at Nordea there will cross your mind?

Speaker 1 19:15

I think that I've had a lot of different leaders. And some of them are really good. Some of them are not that good. So I guess it's it wouldn't be very scattered. Um, my experience at least, I would not generalize. Because I think that there are good leaders and there are some that are just not that good. So I don't really know how to define it further.

federica giuseppini 19:54

Do you think they have something in common all the leaders you had?

Speaker 1 20:01

I think we're all rather young. But apart from that, I mean, I've had both female and male, mostly male, I would say. But no patterns or anything.

federica giuseppini 20:19

That's good. So you can see some traits of people that would become they're more likely to be leaders in the bank?

Speaker 1 20:29

Or they are all leaders in the bank technically. Hmm. So I mean, you can always see when someone has more potential than others, I think there are some qualities that definitely stand out and it's someone who you see, oh, this person will develop further and this is someone who's capable. And I think that the people who just very obviously have all the skills like they

have all the knowledge, the expertise, but also the people skills and they're not really afraid to do anything. They're not afraid to ask their manager to escalate things and to take ownership and so on. And I think, then it's very clear that you know, all this person is not going to be my manager for a while for a long time, because they will develop quite quickly. And of course, there are some people who just see that they're just not very good leaders, but sometimes it depends. Sometimes they could also develop further but yeah, maybe not in the same way or not as easily.

federica giuseppini 21:40

Okay, but do you think it's because if you're missing this people skills, it's somehow harder to get them?

Speaker 1 21:53

I think so. At least I mean, I think I work in grip risk and compliance. And I think that people skills are somewhat important because you have both the technical part where it's a lot of just pure knowledge on regulations and legal requirements and so on. But you also talked first line and you need to, you kind of criticize other people's work where you need to be very politically correct. And you have to have the people touch to it because you have to do it in a very delicate but also in a very smart way. And that, to do that, you just need to be a person who has those qualities or you need to learn how to do it. Otherwise, you can come off as rude and people don't really like that. So. So that I guess that's why it's important, at least in that area to kind of have the whole package I think

federica giuseppini 23:02

Can you choose three attributes or adjectives that a leader should have? Three attributes

Speaker 1 23:17

All right, so they have to be knowledgeable in they have to be confident to take ownership but not in like a cocky way but just confident to to stand up for their team members. And they have to be empathic, empathic. I think

federica giuseppini 23:54

that's good. Um, why did you pick those you think?

Speaker 1 24:00

They're the most important ones, the basic ones that people need to be good leaders, but I think they're also the ones that people liked the most. And by people I mean, a leader is like the boss.

federica giuseppini 24:13

That's good. And Can you choose three attributes that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 24:33

They shouldn't be selfish and competitive with their team members, and they shouldn't be afraid to. Just to not be easily threatened, or, yeah, afraid, I guess. Maybe those are opposites of the other ones ahah.

federica giuseppini 25:07

So why did you pick those?

Speaker 1 25:12

I mean, obviously, I just think that they're the worst they were if because if your manager is afraid to raise the customer and or to raise their voice in order to stem for their team members, then they're not very good leaders. But again, this is it also came to my mind because it's a pattern that you see in people. And if you can't take ownership, then you don't really give people

the feeling that you are a leader. So the team members don't really feel. I don't know they don't feel like they have a good manager because if he can stand up for me, then I don't feel secure.

federica giuseppini 25:57

Mm hmm. Okay. Did you ever feel that way?

Speaker 1 26:03

And I guess I did when I was when I was telling my manager that they need to fight for me and they wanted me to be in that position or to offer me a job that he needed to raise this with his manager, which maybe he did, maybe he didn't do enough. So I feel like at that point, I knew that he wasn't a very good leader.

federica giuseppini 26:28

Okay. Can you give me an example of a situation where you have experienced good leadership?

Speaker 1 26:44

I think is similar to the one before, but if, if I were to speak in more general terms, I think I have a sense so I had a good manager when There's someone that on a more general level, I click when, but where I also felt guided and challenged because it's not enough just to click with a person when you don't really feel like they're your manager or that their leader. They are a leader then it's kind of the collaboration and just connection is a bit weird. But when I feel that we have the chemistry, but I'm also being supported and challenged and guided through my development, and they're pushing me to develop I think that's for me, that's good management.

federica giuseppini 27:40

But do you have a specific situation you can think of?

Speaker 1 27:55

I think it won't be too specific hmm. But in, in my previous project, I had a challenge where so what we do is to point out problems that we have in our first line in the bank, and we have to push people on taking actions to fix those problems. So those actions are they need to be listed as actual actions. So they need to come up with a plan of every issue that I raised. They need to come up with an action plan for all of these issues. So I had a problem with my in my previous project, where people on first line just they were kind of denying to take ownership and the communication wasn't really going anywhere because I had the issues and they needed to commit to action. But they can't say no, but this is not really our responsibility is somewhere in our area. But we we don't really know. So they kept just pushing back and back and it wasn't going anywhere. And it was really obvious that if it's in their area, they at least can just take the ownership to figure out who it is. But they kept pushing back and throwing everything back to us. So we had a really long communication, I think, my manager, he stood by me and in the development of, or once it became a problem. So we sat down and he helped me draft a really long email where we just listed all of the actions that needed to be taken and why we think that they should take ownership and we argued really well for everything that we wanted. So he actually spend an hour with me just writing an email. So I think that that was really it. was really nice because, um I just felt supported in that moment and he knew exactly what I was doing. And he was part of it. And so I knew that if we had to escalate to a meeting with someone, then he wouldn't know what's going on as you would be there to support me, so I thought that was a good situation. But it was a bad situation.

federica giuseppini 30:27

But uh, yeah. And can you describe a situation where you've experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 30:42

Probably many. ahah. Think that. Speaking generally, and not pointing fingers I had I just had a manager who was really negative about, you know, about Nordea in general. And he, it was very obvious that it was new for him to be a leader. And he was also pretty young, and he had a big team. And that was because he has the knowledge and the expertise to happen. But he didn't have the leadership skills, and that really showed and I think the bad thing was that he wasn't really hiding that he didn't like your organization or the problems and I mean, a lot of people are vocal about what they don't like, but he was just too negative and to the point that where he just creates a negative vibe, where even if people come to us and they want something then everyone knows that our team is just very negative, and we have should people Or we just scold them and we tell them why you're writing this email. You're not supposed to doing things like that and that just creates negative atmosphere in general. So I guess that's kind of a bad example.

federica giuseppini 32:17

One second my phone is dying. I'm gonna get the charger Real quickly. I'll be right back. That's really good. No, but that's a very good example of both example of leadership. So if you were a leader, how would you motivate your employees?

Speaker 1 33:27

Well, I guess motivation comes from different places. So something very important is to have a common goal and a common purpose. And then I think it's just important to have some kind of personal understanding to how everyone works. And then you need to kind of motivate everyone individually, but also create a team atmosphere where you have regular team meetings. You have purpose you, you know what everyone is doing. You just always have to seem very organized. As they seem because I mean, leaders are also people. So sometimes they're now but they have to make it seem like they have it all together to kind of inspire trust. So I guess that's how I would think about it.

federica giuseppini 34:23

That's pretty good. And so talking about your situation or work you're happy about, you know, your team and your leader. It seems to me that you said you're happy about

Speaker 1 34:38

well, it's changing right now because we just changed our team and right now we don't have a manager because mine. He was one of the good ones, so he quit and he's going somewhere on a higher position, and, uh, we don't really have one right now. So right now it's quite chaotic.

federica giuseppini 35:00

Yeah, how does that feel? So you're gonna appeal these you don't report to anyone right now?

Speaker 1 35:07

Yeah, well, I had PLDs but um, I think it will take them a couple more weeks to find another person. And I think I'm just a bit anxious about who is going to be and how they will be and so on. So I think I've just, I was scared because I had a manager who I liked and we were getting along and we just, it was good enough so to say, but now I don't want to know what are we up against our I mean, I don't know what kind of manager I would have. I hope it's a good one.

federica giuseppini 35:48

Yeah, because I guess if it's a bad one, he would, how would it How would it affect you? If it'd be a bad leader?

Speaker 1 35:56

I've been trying really hard not to think about that But like I said, I'm just, I'm really anxious about it. I just hope that it's something that I can work with. Obviously, if it's something bad,

then I would have to deal with that as we go. But for now, I haven't. I really haven't been using any resources or my energy to, to think about what I will do if it's a bad one, but I think I'm just I am. I mean, I am wasting energy on just thinking what will happen, but I'm trying to stop.

federica giuseppini 36:37

I think that's quite normal. I mean, a leader because it's, I think, at least if I can share my opinion. I think a leader might be even more important than the jobs and the job and the tasks themselves.

Speaker 1 36:55

Yes.

federica giuseppini 36:55

So it's Yeah, so it's a very big part of your you know, your life. In that sense, so of course, it makes sense that you're anxious.

Speaker 1 37:05

Yeah, definitely. I think you're right. And the team that you are in, it's very important because no matter how much you like your job, if you don't like your team, then it's just it is a problem and vice versa, of course. So I think so far, we had a good balance. My team members are great. I really like them. I like my manager. So I think that also influenced my attitude towards the work that I'm doing. So from now on, will saee

federica giuseppini 37:38

Oh, you talk about attitude, how do you think it affected?

Speaker 1 37:47

my attitude towards the work or?

federica giuseppini 37:51

Yeah

Speaker 1 37:51

Well, I just think that when you have a good leader, then you kind of enjoy working more or at least in the beginning, Because I didn't really know what to do. And it was a new area that didn't exist before. So we had to build out everything. And I think we still are. So no one really knows exactly what they're doing. And I think just a collective lack of knowledge is a bit motivating because I know that okay, I don't know anything, but it's not just me. So everyone is in the same place. And my manager was, he was really good at sometimes if I'm stuck. He was really good at just suggesting things that I could do to solve the problem or to brainstorm or if you would say, oh, what do you think, where do you think we should start? And sometimes I really needed it because a lot of times he said, Well, what do you think? where it was very obvious that I just can't find an answer, but I think just challenging me on the spot to think of something I always thought of something. So I thought he was just really good at Okay, let's think of something and then we do, which is, not everyone can do that. Especially when not really knowing anything. But just using your knowledge on this subject as a whole or just risk knowledge to apply it to the very specific area. So I thought it was a good learning. I guess a good leader is someone I can learn from as well. Just not purely only knowledge, but also how to approach those kinds of situations.

federica giuseppini 39:38

Now, I'm going to ask you a few background question just to end the conversation. So since this is a study of generations, is it okay if I asked you how old you are? Yes. I am 32. Perfect. And what's your official position in the organization?

Speaker 1 39:58

Operational risk Officer.

federica giuseppini 40:01

Okay, nice. And two more things, I'm gonna send you a link to another survey. And it's gonna take maximum three minutes.

Speaker 1 40:12

Okay, no worries at all.

federica giuseppini 40:14

And in the meantime, when I send you this, do you think is there something I should have asked you about leadership that you're like, you know, you you want to know, you're even curious to know about leadership in general or something that I should have touched base and I didn't see, that comes to your mind.

Speaker 1 40:38

You know, I can't really think of anything right now. I mean, I guess they're just, I would be curious to see studies of leadership and leaders and what kind of if there is a pattern of personality types that make good leaders or bad ones, but, but that's also very technical and specific. But I think those are kind of, but otherwise I don't really know I think your questions were great and you covered a lot so I don't know.

federica giuseppini 41:09

Yeah, well, thank you.

9.1.16 Interview with Simona

Fri, 4/17 11:07AM • 53:07

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, leader, graduate program, rotation, company, leadership, feel, work, necessarily, talking, important, graduate, nice, situation, ownership, contribute, achieving, colleagues, manager, interview

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

federica giuseppini 00:02

Let's see if this works. Okay, great. Do you remember your first day at work.

Speaker 1 00:13

Yes.

federica giuseppini 00:14

Can you tell me a little bit about it?

Speaker 1 00:18

Okay. Ah, firstly at work. I mean, I was so since we're part of the graduate program. Our first two weeks actually at work, were a little different compared to a normal employee, I think, because we had this kind of onboarding program for two weeks, where, for the first day at work

I mean was very I, if I remember correctly, like, you know, practical stuff so getting like laptops and getting that kind of stuff working, and meeting the people like colleagues, because we were like 12 people that started at the same time, I think, in the graduate program, so it was just getting to know them getting to know our leader and, and there were some changes, because I think like the leaders that was previously in contact with us, was all of a sudden not our leader because they changed the organizational chart. So if there was a new person. That was our leader, and it was. Yeah, a fairly young I would say woman like in her 30.

federica giuseppini 01:38

Yeah. Okay. So when did you start?

Speaker 1 01:44

I started in September, 2019. Okay. Yeah, and it was right after finishing my master's thesis I went there. Okay.

federica giuseppini 01:56

Did you work as a student there before. Did you just come from another organization.

Speaker 1 02:02

No, I came from another organization but I was working there, while I was working there full time for a couple of months after finishing my master's thesis. But I worked part time most of the time in that firm and it was a compared to Nordea was a small software company with 10 people so it was totally like different, you know, different setup. Different experience.

federica giuseppini 02:35

So, what were you since you were coming from this. Let's say maybe smaller firm. what were you looking forward then, what were you afraid of before starting your journey as a graduate.

Speaker 1 02:49

Um, so I was mostly like... I think, I wanted to go to a bigger company just because I thought that the complexity of a bigger company would be a challenge, compared to where you know in a small company, like the relationships and all that is very simple and you know who does what. So if you need something you know who to go to. And it's like, it's very simple. Whereas, in the company like a bigger size company. I thought that that added complexity is gonna be like a fun challenge to experience. And, I mean, it couldn't like it couldn't be more true, but definitely like, I realized very early that in Nordea, like, just like the biggest asset and talent at the same time is like knowing who to ask if you need something, because it's such a big company and there's so many people and, like if you think about anything at all, literally, you know you need to you need to do something and then you think is there a process for this is there other people that are doing this and then you ask like 10 people and six are gonna tell you like no there is no process for this has never been done. We don't have an idea and then four people are going to tell you like yeah, this person in this part of the company has done this or you should talk to this person so it's just like, it's very complex it's knowing who to talk to and who to ask. So, it's as simple as that but I think this challenge.

federica giuseppini 04:36

Okay, and let's see can you remember a time where your age, played a role?

Speaker 1 04:47

Ehmmm okay.. I don't think... like it's very hard to say, oh, okay well I know, maybe but it's not necessarily work related more like social related, because you know the social interactions at work, because I feel like younger people, you know, prefer to like socialize more and do things with their colleagues. Whereas, the people, the older people, whatever that means. I'd like people who have families, you know and look forward to go home to their families are like, you

know, it's a different like level of social interaction you have with these kind of colleagues. So it was very nice to be a part of the graduate program because then you have like minded colleagues in the same age group that also don't necessarily have families you know and like to hang out after work, and you know do all kinds of social activities that I think, you know, in the end, that reflects a lot also in the work relationship that you have with them, because you like you've seen each other in different situations and you've experienced things together so you become closer and I think when you become closer with someone. It kind of goes hand in hand but it's also easier to collaborate with them and work with them. And so from that, like side I would say the age kind of place difference, but I wouldn't like I wasn't really never in a situation where. Just the fact that I was young would put me in a worse or in a better position for that matter.

federica giuseppini 06:31

Good. But do you think this is because there is, I don't know did you experience more of this and are they or somewhere else about this social difference I'd say, because maybe at the bank I imagine that the average age might be different

Speaker 1 06:53

Yeah, of course, I mean it was definitely the, the smaller company where I worked before it was only mostly young people and the two owners were the oldest people was family but otherwise it was the young people but there is also, I mean, the average age at Nordea I don't know what that is but probably older. But there's a lot of young people as well so I mean it's really you know you, and in this graduate program is young people are the ones that are on the graduate program so you get to interact with them. And then our day to day colleagues, so to say, I usually you know a little bit older, which is. Yeah, different kind of interaction but I wouldn't. It's not a you know it's not a rule, it's like, it tends to be this way but I've also had a like colleague in my previous rotation was like very family committed and, like, 40 plus, and he was very fun to work with. Even though he didn't you know he we never interacted outside of working hours but he was really super fun or he still is a really fun guy. So I mean, to a certain level I would say that the social interaction, based on like age group, really kind of helped to then lead them to work relationship as well. Sorry I just have to unlock my computer for over, in case and someone needs me.

federica giuseppini 08:25

can you tell me about a time where you felt most appreciated and rewarded by one of your leaders?

Speaker 1 08:33

Oh, okay, most appreciated and rewarded. I think for me. Getting responsibility is like getting more responsibility is a way of leaders, it's like showing that they appreciate you and they while you your work, because I feel like I mean you don't give responsibility, a lot of responsibility to people who you don't trust and don't think they do good work. So for me personally that's like the biggest kind of awards, you can get, because then I know that this leader really you know trust in my skills and my, you know capabilities. So, I feel like that is, besides like the, I guess, you know like just words of appreciation, because I think there is different ways of showing you know appreciation you can show it by doing something like for instance giving someone responsibility or you can just say, you know, I appreciate your work that was great. I think both are nice, but the one where you get responsibility is like, in some ways would have been more like real and tangible. But, I mean, I had like a recent example that I can remember and just like to understand the context, I have been in this rotation for months and half. Now, so it's still like very new, and I work with a manager who is kind of on him. Like, I guess you could say a high position or has a lot of responsibility. He's Portfolio Manager for whole of business banking and basically I mean I helped him like with getting materials prepared for his. They call it Quarterly Review meetings. And it was a lot of

federica giuseppini 10:43

the quarterly like for you. For them it's not the PLD right?

Speaker 1 10:48

No, no, that's not that's not leadership that's like a business meeting with business people where they review the. Yeah. And for that, we I helped him and then afterwards, or after he presented. You know, he said like Simona thank you so much for help, I couldn't have done it without you and that's like, it's nice to hear, of course, and I was very happy that he appreciated this so it helps these kind of encouraging words as well, but I truly feel that like one, you know, you're able like they let you take on more responsibility and contribute more and it comes naturally, then it's like the true kind of appreciation and also just to like, because this might be a little bit confusing for you and so it's easier to understand. So, in nordia we have people leaders. But most people leader doesn't necessarily have anything to do with my daily work, because we are in this graduate program setup where we get assigned to rotation. So right now I talking about my rotation manager, because it's more like this, these are the people I interact with daily and that's giving me feedback on my work.

federica giuseppini 12:12

Okay, so how do you feel is the difference between your people leader and your rotation leader figure of leadership?

Speaker 1 12:22

Yeah, yeah. So the people, a leader, like that's, I think, for most people in Nordea. Or, and it depends because for some people it could be that the people leader is also a, like a manager in the traditional sense so he also gives them tasks and assignments right and they report to him. In my case it's different. So with my people leader I mean I just had one to one on one with him. Before talking to you and we discuss more like a personal kind of development you know and reflections on how is going on the rotations, and he gives his feedback you know and makes recommendations. And I think one was like I talked to him, for instance, when I talked to him nice Today I spoke to him about how my rotation is going and kind of how I feel, you know, comfortable, not comfortable in it. When dealing with different situations types of situations. And I think what was nice today was that he was very encouraging in terms of like that it's normal to have these feelings, and he has been through it as well because he also started as a graduate. And just like he kind of you know assured me that it's normal to be in that position, and in the situation that we are in in terms of like setting a new rotation every six months, like it's normal to not feel comfortable, and that you know it's a learning opportunity, and it's not like I mean it's not necessarily something that I wouldn't have realized by myself. But it's nice to get that confirmation from your people either you know that this is actually like the way it is and the way it goes and the way it's supposed to be. So, yeah,

federica giuseppini 14:19

that's, that's good...

Speaker 1 14:20

So yeah so that's people leader, and then the task or rotation manager, that's very focused you know on work deliverables. So we don't talk so much about my personal you know development. Also, even though I would appreciate that we did, and also with this with the rotation manager, because I feel like it's also important that maybe like not not necessarily personal development in the same sense as with the people leader, but like development you know in terms of like, Where, where is this rotation heading where it where I want to be what what I can develop in, in order to be able to contribute and like to be of more value to him and to the people that we work with, and sometimes there is not like enough time for this, because we, you know, he's, he's a very busy man. And like he literally you work day and night and like

all the time so whenever I get a chance to speak to him is very, you know like, you know, ABC, we have to, you know, talk about the work and we cannot really have like, I cannot use his that his time at the moment for these kind of folks. So, but, I, we, it's not like we didn't talk about it at all. And we, of course, discuss like where is this rotation going and what my role is should be in the rotation. But, you know, a lot less than compared to when I speak to my people leader.

federica giuseppini 16:11

Okay, which one do you think is most beneficial for you?

Speaker 1 16:19

I don't think you can compare it like this, like, which one is more beneficial because they both contribute to different things. So it's like with the people leader is very focused you know on the personal development and also like about like more the soft style. That's like how do I feel at work you know and my comfortable and all that whereas in with my rotation manager is more like tangible, you know, domain stuff where we discuss specific issues related to work, and where I can learn a lot from him in that area, which I cannot get from my people leader and the other way around so I wouldn't necessarily you know compare it in that way.

federica giuseppini 17:05

Okay. All right, that's okay. So talking about leader, like, just this this leader right, what, what is the role of a leader, like, how would you define a leader?

Speaker 1 17:23

So I mean, I think they're like, I can hear a little bit of my echo right now. Can you just, lower, yeah. And the role of the leader I mean I think the questionnaire that you sent me like there were a lot of you know descriptions of what a leader should be. But I think honestly like, what, what we also discussed at work in relation to our leaders because our leaders actually changed during this graduate program. What I think is like the most important is to feel that your leader has your back. That's when you you know you can like trust Him, and that you can go and really open up, and like have this honest relationship, about how you feel at work without necessarily it, you know, leading into you know whether like with. I think in professional setup it's really hard to find this balance where I mean it's still your manager is the work environment you should do everything you can to support the business and support the company you work in. But there are situations where you're, you know, personal needs and want my actually contradict with those needs of the company. And like not in a very, you know, Big Bang kind of way, but I mean there is like small things where the company would like you to work here, but you would like to work somewhere else. And I think it's like a really kind of thin line, and I feel like all of the people that you're going to come across with like your work life, everyone is you know trying to achieve the, like, best for the sake of the company. So, for the sake of, you know, their reporting for the sake of the tests that they are supposed to deliver that eventually contribute to where the company is heading. But I feel like in your people leader you should really have that person that you can confide in like in terms of you, you can address things that don't necessarily feed into that you can, like, put, like, I feel like in these conversations with your people that are and in this kind of relationship, you should be able to like put yourself first and not the company for some like look at your own you know life and what I mean in terms of like professional life and where you are and how you feel about it and where you want to go because for you personally like no matter which company you're in, it doesn't necessarily mean that this company is the best choice for you. And I feel like people leaders should transcend kind of the borders of the company you know where you should be able to figure out with him like what you want to do and that perhaps might be even somewhere else, but I feel like if you have that kind of relationship with your people leader it's like it's way more open and it's, it's very, like, you know, it's just honest relationship where you can address all of the different issues and it's more likely that you'll find the solution to them within the company and you can say and contribute if there are things that you like about that specific company. Then if you, if you don't

address them. So, I mean, like, really, you know, knowing that your people leader has your back and he's gonna you know protect not only the interest of the company because that's what everyone else is doing but also your personal and own you know incentives, then you know that you have like a good people leader.

federica giuseppini 21:24

Okay. That's a good a very complex explanation so I like that. Thank you. Talking about Nordea's values there for right. So yeah, passion, courage ownership and. Yeah. Yes. So, what did they mean to you in the sense that, do you see them in your daily way of working, do you perceive them liking yourself in the work you put in and in the others around you?

Speaker 1 22:00

Um, I mean, yes and no. Like, it really depends which one of them we're talking about. We actually like had this kind of discussion also during our one of our boot camps we have that as a part of the graduate program, because I think it starts from what these words kind of mean for you individually and then how you you know see them act out in the company. So if we start for instance like courage and ownerships like those two very kind of straightforward and easy from my perspective, Because owner, like, first of all, I really like saying that ownership is super important value to have and that everyone has to have a sense of ownership over their work, because otherwise it's very difficult to get things done. And, I mean, I, I think, in a corporation like this, where it's a lot of people that are doing, you know, similar things. It's very easy to, kind of, you know, hope that someone else will solve this. So, I think it's an important like really important value to incorporate in the in the business culture, especially when the company is their size because, like, if we compare it to a smaller company like there is, if there is 10 people and it's very, you know clearly defined who is doing what like if something is your responsibility, then I mean you have to take ownership over it, otherwise you will get fired because it's really easy to, you know, know that this person is responsible for this. So I mean you have to get that, but in a, in a again in a bigger company like this, it's like, it's not always that clearly defined, you know, who actually should have done one. And it's kind of flow, you know from one side to the other. So, I feel like sometimes when things are not that clearly defined and especially because it's because of its size of the company. It's easier to like get away from things and say like well that's not my job but someone else who is supposed to do this. And I've seen that a lot. To be honest, especially in my previous rotation in my previous project. I've really seen this a lot, where it's like I wish people took more ownership and just like sit down you know and get it done, instead of like, just pointing fingers at each other, basically. So, to transfer the ownership. The courage. I mean, that's also something that I have discussed with my people leader, actually. Just a second. I'm sorry I have to open the door for my dog because I think he's trying to get in. So, for the coverage, we discuss it for instance when my people leader today about, like, you know, having the courage to kind of step up and say things, and contribute even if you're in uncomfortable position, especially for us graduates who are fresh from school haven't been in the air for that long and especially when you're working with quite senior people. But I think it's really important to have that courage, because otherwise I mean you'll never know you might have, you know, you might have said something good, you might have some something stupid, but you know you'll, you will know if you don't try. So I think that's on like a very personal level, important value. Whereas the ownership is more like, you know, and kind of on a organizational level where everyone really has to have that in order for things to work and if they don't, then it can be really difficult. passion. I mean, I see. Like, I have this, you know, kind of, divided relationship with this value because I feel like when you have passion for your work like then everything goes, easy, like if you're passionate about something and you really like it, then it's like, you know, things usually just, just go smooth, because you have this drive, and you have like, you know, it's not like it's not difficult to have courage, or it's not difficult to take ownership if you're passionate about something, of course you will. But passion is more like a feeling for me in terms of these values that is not necessarily something that you just decide to have like you can decide to have more courage you know you can decide to have

more ownership of your things but deciding to have more passion about something, I mean, that's more like it's either there or it's not. So I'm not sure how, like you enforce this value in a way because I think it's very Yeah, kind of feeling face value and that's what yeah I mean I see people that are super passionate, like really you can see it. And then I also see people who you know just take it as a, you know, as a day at work, and they look forward to go back home. And don't necessarily you know live their heart and soul at work and. And again it's it's a big company so it's, it really depends. And it really depends on the, I guess situation you're in and if that can change. Also, while being at the same company, depending on what kind of people you work with what, you know, has to work with and it can go up and down so it's like a very unstable thing. I don't necessarily like that, like, that is the, you know, one of the values I don't, I don't see it as such a good choice, as well. And then the collaboration. I mean, about one is like. They. Yeah, I mean, of course, it again it's a huge company so there is always a lot of people that have to come together to get things done. And it's very hard to achieve something on your own. And the sooner like you realize that the better, basically. So, I mean that I don't necessarily.... collaboration. Yeah, I mean yeah how that translates, I, I think most of the people know you know that the collaboration is the key to achieving something, and not the So, so it's not necessarily like you see a lot of people who like would you call it kick for themselves, you know, like they they play with others and they know they have to play with others because otherwise they, it's not possible to get somewhere.

federica giuseppini 29:50

Good. Can you describe a specific situation where you have experienced good leadership?

Speaker 1 30:04

Okay. Let me think one by one.

federica giuseppini 30:10

Doesn't have to be at Nordea can also be at your previous work.

Speaker 1 30:14

Yeah, that's what I'm thinking as well. Okay. So, if I should. I mean it's maybe not like a super specific situation, but like a, kind of, you know, how do leaders that I considered good leaders handle situation. And I think, like a very good leader in situations where, like, you work on something, and like they have an idea of what it should be. But instead of like telling you what you do what you have to do. They kind of, you know, just like tell you, like the direction, like where we want to go, and like this is where you know this is the end goal, but they really leave it up to you to figure out how. I think that's like a very important skill to have. In a leader as well, because I really don't you know like to be like micromanaged and you know boss around. And so I think good leadership is definitely that that you can kind of you know enable people to bring their best and show you how things could be done. Because if you as a leader thinks that you already know how it's supposed to be done. Then, you know, why don't you just do it yourself Why do you need people to do it for you. So, I mean, I think, in like being really an enabler. Like, allowing people to, to show what's in them and to contribute is like super important. In, like this everyday life work life with when you talk to a leader and you when you, you know, work together. Because you have to, you have to be able to, you know, contribute from your own instead of just like following instructions on how to do something. Yeah.

federica giuseppini 32:40

But Do you have a specific situation you can tell me about.

Speaker 1 32:45

Ahhhhh, okay. I mean, that's the thing is that like I feel like there's a lot of like mold situations. You know, I was in this kind of. I'm not necessarily something that stands out. But like in my, like, now I'm going to talk about my previous job for instance where I worked as a kind of you

know product designer for a software application. And we needed to develop a new feature for our customers. Then I mean my people leader, and that in this century would be also the same person as the test manager so not two different people. He would you know. Tell me kind of describe the problem, described, you know, what is it that our customers are facing. And what do we have to solve, and of course he like had an idea of what it could be. Like the solution, and then he would say you know I think it could, we could do something like this and that. But then he would you know let me, let me know, kind of develop it by myself and challenge, even his ideas about what it should be. Because not, like, not always, you know, I thought that it was it was the best idea. So I think, actually, that makes me think that also, you like where you have this relation to where you're a leader, where you feel comfortable enough to actually also challenge him. I think that's, that's very important and that's also like an example of good leadership where the leader can accept, and you know, being challenged and actually wants to be challenged by their employees, because, I mean, I think this is where, what you know, creativity and like innovation really kind of sparks, because then it's like you bounce ideas off of each other and you really kind of, you know, developed something, something, something for the better.

federica giuseppini 35:11

And can you describe a specific situation where you've experienced bad leadership?

Speaker 1 35:17

Bad leadership... ehmm I mean, that would be like the situations where I said that when, when your leader doesn't have your back. Um, and I mean it's a little bit like difficult to talk about it as, like, you know, labeling things as a bad leadership, I think it was like a show off of maybe some lack of leadership skills that I experienced the at Nordea with my first leader. Um, and that was mostly like what I spoke about it was like in relation to our rotations in the in the graduate program, or where a lot of people wanted to go different places that we really go because it's all so it's all framed by budgets and, you know, where you like, which, you know, parts of the company can have a graduate cannot have a graduate and stuff like that. Without saying too many details about it. But basically, we all felt, I feel like I mean I don't want to speak on behalf of everyone in the team but the people that I talked to we all agreed that kind of, we felt like she was a woman in that case, lit was a little bit too much on the side of you know the company and the interest of the company. And now really like pursuing, and supporting our own interests, and of course she had her own limitations, you know, and things she had to, like, like, kind of face wiggle space you could call it you know where she could within which she could work, but we still all felt like she wasn't like trying hard enough to, to kind of support, what we wanted. From our professional development in graduate in the graduate program, and was more like like just say, No, this is, this is not possible. This is not you know happening like saying something is not possible it's just like when you just start you know in a new company and then be like okay this is not happening. I think it's a very kind of weird way of approaching an issue, because, I mean, you should as a leader, I think you really cannot have that mindset that something is like not possible. I think you should also encourage your own employees to you know think beyond the limitations and you know see ways of achieving something rather than seeing closed borders and something not being possible. So, and one actually is our colleague. He resigned after a month from the, from the graduate program, and like the combination of, you know, factors, where because he was told that he was not going to be able to go to the place he wanted to go. So, to basically work what he wanted to work with. And he really didn't appreciate her leadership skills and you know he she really didn't make him feel like she was there for him and they could figure it out together, and he had other job opportunities so he was just like, you know, I'm, I'm out of here.

federica giuseppini 39:14

make sense I think if you don't have opportunities and you don't feel like you're growing which I'm guessing it's quite important as a graduate.

Speaker 1 39:22

Yeah, exactly. Yeah, it's very important for us as graduates and it was very important for him. And like, basically. I mean, he you know he he didn't see any growing opportunities but at the same time I mean in the time that I knew him, I think he was like a very clever guy he wanted to work with machine learning, you know he was an engineer from DTU like it you know he was like he was the type of people that Nordea wants to attract, and then they get in and after a month he resigns. Yeah. So, I mean, that was like, to me, that was a failed, you know, failed leadership in a way because I think he would have stayed longer if he felt like he was taken seriously and whose development was taken seriously and not only like some bureaucratic rules of where you can work or cannot work like, essentially, right now we're in a situation where people work outside of the boundaries that we were supposed to be in the first place. But you know it's like it happened naturally it kind of emerged through dialogues and discussions with people, and like our new leader he was so also if we if we all of a sudden came up and said oh we want to work over there the next you know rotation. I mean, he would also say like, well, that might be a problem because this is not within you know the scope of the organization that you're hired in. But, you know, he. I think he wouldn't necessarily see closed doors, right away. No. Yeah, that was, that was a kind of bad leadership.

federica giuseppini 41:24

I mean as a graduate you also have to figure it out where your full time employment is and you have to feel like you have options in some ways and if you don't have options and you feel like they really put you in a box, I guess, and only choose between this and that's it, which I guess that's not what people look forward when they start. I mean I don't know I personally I don't think I have a clear idea of my career path exactly you know where what department doing exactly what, so make sense. And then I have two quick questions. Can you choose three attributes that a leader should have always have.

Speaker 1 42:10

Ah, so a leader should always be very open. Hmm. Ah. And then I also think a leader should kind of be. What could you what words could you use like so what the things I said about you know, encouraging like your own contribution and developmental like enabling, I guess that would be the word so leadership, enable you to do work and also develop on a more personal level. And then, like the that the other thing that I thought about like that he should like have your back, so like always be kind of supportive and on your side.

federica giuseppini 43:06

Yeah. Can you choose three attributes that a leader should never have?

Speaker 1 43:13

mean okay so in some way, is the opposite of course so what like what is the opposite of on this, like you should have been deceiving you shouldn't you know, paint a different picture or she shouldn't they send a big different picture compared to what it is. Um, I think she or he should... Yeah, I also think that they, you, you, like, leaders shouldn't let their employees know that their personal achievements, and you know, growth is more important than the growth of the people that you're leading, because I think that's also what happened in the best situation that I described. So I think, I mean, part of the reason why she saw closed, closed doors was because she wanted to like satisfy her own leaders, you know, and kind of climb the corporate ladder in, in that sense, and therefore she puts like her interests and needs before our interests and needs and I think that's like that just breaks the trust right away. Ah. And that was the last thing, um, I mean this is also displayed because I have. I think it's, like, based on a concrete example. But I think, also, a leader shouldn't like. I mean we had this situation when I talked about socializing being very important. We had the situation that was our leader didn't really understand this but socializing is just as important, you know, and connecting with people. So I guess leader you

know shouldn't kind of discourage you from, you know, the social aspects of the work life and make you feel like it's like, like you wasting you know time or something on like stuff that is not important to him because it is important. So, yeah.

federica giuseppini 46:03

Yeah, because like you said before it fosters collaboration and also maybe knowing who to ask and then it's, you know, oh yeah, General

Speaker 1 46:11

yeah it's all very important.

federica giuseppini 46:14

Okay. And I just have some background questions. Since this is a study of generation is it okay if I asked you how old you are.

Speaker 1 46:25

Yes, of course I'm 26.

federica giuseppini 46:28

Perfect. And what is your official title in your organization. a graduate and the official title at this CIO office?

Speaker 1 46:40

Yes at Nordea technology.

federica giuseppini 46:46

And where are you from?

Speaker 1 46:48

From Slovakia.

federica giuseppini 46:49

Yeah. Okay, And so no two more things I'm gonna send you the link to a second server which is as quick as the first promise maybe one more minute. No problem. And it's very similar. And my last question while I do this is, do you think if there's something I should have asked about leadership that you might have experienced or you wanted to share and I didn't give you a chance to share, or even something that you are curious to know about leadership.

Speaker 1 47:23

Not necessarily about leadership I think was I mean could have. So, maybe, I don't know how far you are with your thesis and I know it's usually very explorative process. So you might not even know yourself, but, like, giving you a little bit of background, just like where you kind of going with your thesis. This could also help me to you know provide more kind of information, feeding into directions that you're going so that's what I would suggest, if you do another interview,

federica giuseppini 47:59

I actually started by doing that. And then I stopped because I want people to give me the exact first things that I think of without even knowing what I'm looking for.

Speaker 1 48:12

Okay, but that's an approach as well.

federica giuseppini 48:15

as well. And usually when people ask I give, I always do a briefing after the interview. So they they know. But, yeah, like you said, it's explorative so I don't know hundred percent what I was going for my my first assumptions were that. So I'm actually a former employee and are there. I'm a student, I was a student and then I went on exchange so I stopped working there for other reasons too. And I noticed how. And then I had some courses about leadership and then I went back thinking about are there, you know, and about my experience and what is leadership what is management, What is the difference, what are people looking for that right. And when I started talking to my colleagues, and also some leaders, which I'm friends with in honor there. Then I started noticing that the view were very different. And it was just, to me at least in my personal perception, there was a gap between what people perceived as a good leader. And the way leaders should be. And the way that I think a complex structure and organization is Nordea tries their leader to be so there's this major mismatch between the expectations and the actual delivery of this practices if we want to say so. So my assumption what it was, is was that people. There was a big difference when I was talking to younger generations instead than older and also I could see that maybe people in the same position that as different ages, think, very differently. So, for instance, I talked to two head of graduates. And I can tell you that their view is divergent in some ways and the same you notice but I think it's very curious to see that it's, it could be because of the huge age difference or other factors so that was a little bit of a background. So you know, whether you're helping me achieving. It was really nice

Speaker 1 50:22

So, can Are you also talking to leaders?

federica giuseppini 50:26

Yeah, I'm talking to everyone. Yeah. So, so far, I have had I think 12 versus 13 interview so I'm almost done. I talk to students heads of students, graduates heads of graduates. And then I talked to one of the heads of actually leadership in the sense that the person that organizes leadership and changes, under there. So that was really interesting. And then I'm talking to full time employees that, you know, we're some word people leaders, and some were just employees. Yeah, so I'm talking to everyone. But it's really nice. It's definitely very interesting and I when I'm done I'm gonna, I think I'm going to prepare one or two pages to share with the people that contributed. If you want to know, you know, the main findings of course everything is confidential

Speaker 1 51:23

definitely that would be super cool.

federica giuseppini 51:25

Yeah, so just the general lines is going to be so you don't have to read my whole thesis, but you can know what you know you actually helped me to figure it out.

Speaker 1 51:33

Cool. And when are you handing-in your thesis?.

federica giuseppini 51:37

Yeah, I mean I very much don't see it happening in May, because it took me so long to get interviews because I think it's easier for people to cancel, when it's a video interview, not in your case, of course, but in many other cases, because they just oh I'm busy today. Let's do next week you know I'm busy today. Let's go next weekend so there was a person that actually did that he managed to do that for three weeks. So, overall, it took me a little longer than I expected. I was also late, coming from exchange I was actually in China, so I was a little leaving coming back and. And so I think I'm gonna end in September.

Speaker 1 52:21

Yeah, but I I was writing my thesis last year and we did the same. And for the exact same reasons pretty much we even tried to push and like handed in like beginning of June. But we realized that like, I mean, this like we did like 18, interviews, I think, and it was we went to different offices in like Sweden and also here in Denmark. And just like booking time with people you know and like getting them to those interviews, even if it was not online was like it took such a long time, and then doing all the transcripts, like was, again, such a hassle

9.1.17 Interview with Timothy

Wed, 4/1 7:49AM • 1:24:28

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, leader, students, leadership, team, assignments, values, organization, collaboration, culture, younger generation, employee, viewed, role, work, questions, job, situation, team members, speak

SPEAKERS

Speaker 1, federica giuseppini

00:00

We can just chill and talk. And I don't know why there is

Speaker 1 00:06

good. Testing, testing.

00:10

Hello, can you hear us?

Speaker 1 00:12

We won't know until the end.

federica giuseppini 00:18

All right. So I was wondering, do you remember when you got offered the job position as a head of students? I do.

Speaker 1 00:29

Sure. I mean, it was a day, just like any other it seemed. I've been working for Mike and which is my current manager. I was working for her as a management partner or fulfilling a management partner role. I was in Hermes who's in touch trip, so the it facility has it facility. And she pulled me outside as she she likes to do these walk and talks. So she was like, on Go for a walk and talk is nice and nice weather outside, I guess it was this was July or August 2019. And she was mentioning that Bjork, the current head of the it student team was going to be fulfilling a position, leading the graduates in the CIO office and she said someone else needed to fill her position. And she thought that I would be a good candidate. And I pretty much said yes, instantly, because I thought it would be a good, good opportunity for me to be introduced to being a leader and having kind of a playground to develop those leadership skills, because doing so with students is I think a good introduction to that. Before taking the next step to you know, being a leader for a specialists are being laid off for experts

federica giuseppini 01:56

just because you think they're easier to lead?

Speaker 1 02:02

I think the I mean, the demand is a little different, right for students and for full time employees, for students. You know, they're learning on the job. They are, for a lot of them. This is their first experience in the professional world in the corporate world. And the complexity of the work that they do is such that me someone with perhaps, you know, less work experience and a lot of my colleagues is able to still help the students deliver and achieve what they are assigned. I would say that if I were to be leading a team of experts or specialists in the IT organization, related to a different I guess a different Delivery function or skill set, I would need more experience than what I do now in order to be viewed and respected as somebody who actually knows what they're talking about, you know what I mean? So I do think that it's easier to the students in that perspective. Do they require more of your time? Yes. Lots of questions. People want coaching people want constant feedback. But that's part of the job. You know, it's it just when it comes to the actual subject matter. It's definitely a good first step before taking the logical next step of leading a team of more skilled, more tenured people.

federica giuseppini 03:54

And do you remember the first day you had as a head of students?

Speaker 1 03:58

The first day as head of students... Actually, it was a little... it was it was a little hectic. Because I started transitioning into the role and about a week before, I was actually going to be formal, formally introduced as the head of the it student team. So I was, I was already assuming some of the responsibilities that the leader would be accountable for prior to my start date. So I kind of eased my way into it. And in that way, I don't really see there being a big difference between what I was doing the previous week to what I was doing on the actual start date, but I could sense that you know, more and more people are reaching out to me to help solve They're problems looking to me for guidance instead of the previous leader. But it was a little difficult because I had to understand individuals assignments, I had to understand individuals core competencies, career ambitions, trajectories, things like that. Because I was going on vacation in one week for two weeks. So I had I had assumed that leadership role, and then I was about to leave my new team almost immediately after. So I had to make sure that assignments, proper assignments, enough work to do you know, things to last them through that period of time. So yes, yeah, it was a little bit of a blur. And then I came back and I started to implement, you know, structure to the team.

federica giuseppini 04:34

Maybe you had some time to think about it during your holiday?

Speaker 1 05:50

I can tell you during my vacation, I was not thinking a lot about work.

federica giuseppini 06:08

So when they told you you were gonna be the head of students, what were you looking forward?

Speaker 1 06:17

I was really looking forward to the shift in the type of work that I would be doing. So, prior to my leading this team, I was doing a lot of I guess more an analytical work, I was definitely focused on my computer screen for most of the day, you know, developing presentation material, material for managers doing some, some analysis. But now with this role, I was really looking forward to the people dimension. So having conversations with people about development about... you know, according to coordinating the work between the students and the rest of the organization and understanding, you know, what are the priority areas? And how can our team best serve the technology organization? I really like that part of it, trying to orchestrate the students to be a part of the bigger strategic vision.

federica giuseppini 07:22

Okay. Is there something you weren't fearing?

Speaker 1 07:28

Yes, I was fearing that I would not be respected or viewed as an authority figure to her from the students, I guess. So respect from a student's authority viewed as an authority figure from the perspective of the students because I'm very close to age with a lot of students and actually I hired a couple that are older than me. And so I I would be lying if I said I wasn't concerned that me being so close. Nate was going to be a detriment to being able to instruct being able to command being able to drive direction and being able to conduct, you know, conversations about personal and professional development. I mean, how am I supposed to speak to that when I'm, you know, fairly new myself to the corporate environment. But of course, I have a support system behind me. I have very experienced managers who I can seek guidance from and you know, I'm I'm still able to speak to a certain extent to what it's like in terms of transitioning from a student to a full time job and what it entails and what needs to be done in order for that to happen. So me also being a part of the student team at one point, and, you know, fulfilling a different role before stepping into this leadership role, I think helped me gain over perspective that the students currently have in the team and helps me empathize and relate, you know what I mean? unable to understand their situation and understand what actions are needed to take the next step. But, yeah, I was definitely concerned that they wouldn't respect me.

federica giuseppini 09:24

And how do you feel now about it?

09:27

I feel great now a better than I mean, things are going in the proper direction. So I mean, Yeah. And I've it's been a really nice transition. Actually. I've had no... minimal difficulties with assuming this leadership role in people responding to my leadership and I think it's because you know, the values that we hold are similar. And I really can understand the positions that they are and I understand what a student can do and what a student can do. And it's a lot about being a student is wanting to show that you can do something, you know that you can fulfill more responsibility than then people expect if you want to exceed expectations as a student. And you just have to give people the freedom to do that. Really.

federica giuseppini 10:32

What do you think is the best move that you made as a leader for your students? Like what's the time you think you have succeeded the most so far in your role?

Speaker 1 10:52

A specific action or?

federica giuseppini 10:54

Whatever comes to your mind.

Speaker 1 10:55

Okay, I would say that a large part about being part of a team, a well functioning team. And, you know, employing the behaviors and practices that you deem to be core to the functioning of your team is culture. from the, from my perspective, and I think most people would agree culture begins at the top. So if I can communicate to my team, these are my values and because these are my values, do I also expect you to to live these values in your work? Not only do I expect that it'd be from your work, but I also expect that from you personally, right, and it sets a certain expectation in terms of what behavior is acceptable and what behavior is not acceptable. This translates directly into people's work the way you approach yourself. And the way that you integrate your values into your professional environment will directly affect the work itself. It

will affect the relationships that you have within the organization. It will affect the way you communicate, it will also affect the way you deliver. And I think that the biggest success that I've had was being able to introduce an environment, a safe environment, or sorry, a culture where people feel safe to speak their mind, where we can talk about problems. candidly, whether it's a problem with my approach to something or whether it's an obstacle that someone is having with a specific assignment, being able to bring it up in a constructive way and not focus so much on...ehhm on the negative consequences or the, you know, pointing fingers aspect of things, oh, this went wrong, that's your fault. This went wrong. That's your fault. It's a, you know, I observed this. You know, this is not necessarily in line with what we want to do next time, try to do this, know that there's a right way to go about things in a wrong way. And if you as a leader are open and transparent in that communication, then you do create that environment where people feel like they can speak candidly, and that they can not only approach the leader with difficult conversations, but also within the team themselves. Being able to communicate with your team members in a good way, without the I guess mediation of the leader is also super important to Team culture. And one of the things that I've been trying to focus on with this cultural Change is that, you know, your first point of contact should be your team member. If you're having difficulties, talk to your team member first. The skills are probably in the team to deal with whatever situation you're handling, whether it's an issue with a person or an assignment. Getting a peers perspective first, I think is super important. And it also tends to build trust among team members themselves and also foster stronger bonds, stronger interpersonal relationships. So culture, I think the the culture aspect is definitely my biggest achievement.

federica giuseppini 14:36

So, you mentioned your own values.. how do they reflect on your projects and which one do you think it reflects your working culture?

Speaker 1 14:54

I think it's a difficult balance to strike and it's hard to pinpoint one specific value or one specific dimension, because I think to have the performance that you that you want that you seek as a leader, there's more than one dimension that you want to see in play. And it is a balance between being culturally focused and being results focused as well. Right. And one enables the other. If you can implement a good culture, you can... you can see the effect it has on the the deliverables themselves and the productivity of your team. Yeah. I think that at the core, I want people to be honest, I think honesty is one of the main values that I I try to live and try to see exemplified by my team. Because if I don't know what you're feeling or what you're thinking, then there's often going to be a chance that there's going to be either miscommunications or misalignment and expectations or a risk of this person or somebody being unhappy in a certain situation. And when those things happen, it's... it directly affects in a negative way people's engagement. People are unhappy at work. If people are frustrated, it becomes a deterrent to to enjoy your work right? It becomes less engaging, you become less motivated. So if people can be honest about what what experiences they're having, what challenges they're facing If they agree with something that they don't agree with something that needs to be put out into the open and a dialogue needs to happen around that. Otherwise, you know, it's people are going to reach a boiling point, basically. And it's not good for anybody. So honestly, I think is the core but yeah.

federica giuseppini 17:22

Before you were saying that when, you know, maybe you weren't as experienced for this job. And that sometimes you seek guidance. Like you go to your leader and you ask questions for guidance? Can you tell me a good advice, the best advice that your leader gave you so far?

Speaker 1 17:49

it's it's hard to say specifically. I'm trying to think to a certain situation or an example where where I think one of the best advice that you gave me, but it was something that I had also been

that I I also thought it was the right direction to go the right way to go. But I needed assurance was, you know, I'm having I'm trying to have difficult conversations with my team. And I was wondering how open Can I be with the team? Because you know, that sometimes there's things that you don't really need to know, when you're in position, as some of the students are, whether it be contractual, you know, related to finances related to the impact on the bottom line. Those aren't necessarily things that you need to know, to fulfill your responsibilities in the student role, right. But there was a contractual dispute, basically, for the people in Poland and I really wanted I really thought they deserved to know why their current employment situation is the way it is. How open Can I be? And I was basically told that, you know, you should be as open as you can. And that was... that was good advice for me because it's, but because I people know when you're being genuine people know when they're being lied to, right? And if you say as a leader, okay, you know, this is what I can tell you for this in this reason, this is why this is why you're in the situation that you're in. And I can't give you more information than that. Being being as open as you can, will will not only pay the trust of the people that you're leading, but it will also prove to them that You know you are listening and that you do have your best interest in mind. And that you do respect them as employees because you're not just trying to sugarcoat or whatever real truth is under the surface. But it is a difficult balance sometimes as a leader because there is information that you can't share. So how do you then strike the balance between feeling like you, you, like your employees deserve to know the truth and not being able to tell the truth? And that's, that's, that's one of the best lessons she taught me was be open as open as you can, and just phrase it in, in a way. She she helped me a lot with being able to convey a message. You know what I mean, and that's really important is talking about this situation as well, being politically correct. Yeah. Being a being a business you can procure, make sure you have that respect from the team.

federica giuseppini 21:08

So we talked about leadership a little bit now. So at this point, how would you define the role of a leader?

Speaker 1 21:16

The role of a leader... I've very much prescribed to the idea of servant leadership. I'm there to enable my team to deliver that the best they can. Whether it's removing obstacles, whether it's you know, providing input to certain assignments. I think that as a leader in this day and age, you your results are achieved through the team. So I'm not supposed to be sitting there and and doing all of the specialist work that I used to be doing. I need to hand that over handy to hand that over to my team. I need to delegate that out and make sure that I'm that I'm enabling them to take not only responsibility for the different work, but also make sure that they're taking on things that allow them to grow. That allowed them that allows nordia really to leverage the skills of these individuals to the best of our ability, right? So I mean, if I have a if I have a communication task, I'm not going to do I'm not going to take it, I'm going to let a communication specialist in my team take it, who can do the job probably better than me, or automation, you know, if I have an automation task, I'm going to hand it over to the automation specialist. It's my job to to make sure that they're able to do their work that they have the tools and the frameworks and the environment to conduct their work. And also to coach, coaching is a big part of being a leader as well. So being that despite of being there to overcome certain challenges and you know, be an ambassador, support the team protect the team make sure that they're sort of insulated from the noise of the rest of the organization so that they can focus on the value that they create

federica giuseppini 24:02

So, when we talk about, you know, maybe dream leaders, ideal leaders. How do we, as an employee now, not as a leader? How would they collaboration with your ideal leader look like? human relationship and cooperation?

Speaker 1 24:26

Well, I can speak from experience as an employee. I think that an ideal an ideal leader would give me the autonomy and the freedom to drive assignments on my own with minimal interference from them. Because I want to prove that I'm capable of delivering whatever assignment is placed on my desk. But it's also about I think an ideal collaboration is also about having the support there when you need it. So yes, I do want to be entrusted with driving something and I and I'm, I'm okay being accountable for it and being accountable for the results. If I have questions, if I if I have trouble, you know, with a certain aspect of this assignment, I do want to be able to turn to my manager and my leader and say, Hey, I'm really struggling with this. Can Can we talk about? Can Can you maybe provide some insight into how you attack that situation, right. Because I'm also learning I'm also developing and I'm hoping that my leader is more experienced than I am and is able to answer some of the harder questions that I might come across. So it's a weird mix between autonomy and support, right? So being able to being able to work yourself and not be micromanaged, but also having a support system behind you. And I think another aspect another aspect of a good collaboration between a leader and an employee is the leader, using their personal networks or their internal acts, whatever it might be, but giving you the exposure and the opportunity to not only conduct work in your current role, but to give you prospects for future roles as well. So being able to continue that path of development. And I from experience, I can say that I have experienced those things with my with my current leader, and she has put me in a position to succeed and provided me those opportunities, and I definitely wouldn't You're leading a team right now if it wasn't for her. So I think I am in the ideal collaborative environment with my leader. One more thing to that as well. I mean, it's one thing to be supportive and one thing to empathize and give you the opportunities. But the leader also needs to be tough when necessary. If you're, maybe it comes in the form of feedback, right, saying, you know, you did this and this, but you know, this and this could be better. The expectations are not met. You know, you need to be told when what you're doing isn't good enough or isn't on the right track. And yeah, it's It can't be taken personally, of course. So the delivery of that feedback also has to be done in a constructive way. And then an open dialogue, and there has to be an understanding between the two. You know, I'm not coming after you as a person, I'm not saying that you're not good enough, as a person, I'm saying the work that you did is lacking something, you know, or it can be improved in this way. So it also, it needs to be understood from the employee side, as well that, you know, I'm not saying this because of any other reason. And I think it's the best thing for you and me and for Nordea. So...

federica giuseppini 28:43

Yeah, well that is the most important part of any job, it doesn't necessarily have to be a leadership position it can also be about the collaboration in a team.

Speaker 1 28:51

Exactly. But I think that's when I've had the most effective leadership was those those aspects combined with autonomy.... autonomy. This is between a leader and an employee, right? This is what what is the ideal leadership. So someone who gives you autonomy, but somebody who supports you when it's needed, and somebody who's also giving you constructive feedback on the continuous basis. And also sorry, and the last one was exposure. That's right. So giving you the exposure and the opportunities to progress. So those four things.

federica giuseppini 29:46

So, so we all know Nordea's values right? So courage, passion, ownership and collaboration. What do they mean to you and expecially for your role.

Speaker 1 30:09

I can give you a short sentence for each of them. From my perspective, courage, I think is being able to stand up and voice your opinion. Being able to take action when it might not necessarily

be the most popular action or decision, but when you know that it provides the most value to the bank as a whole. I think a lot of what people do is for themselves and not for Nordea as a company. So we also need to be asking ourselves what's best for Nordea. But yes, courage yes standing up being able to voice your opinion, take the tough conversations. Passion, it's about being being engaged in what you do, being... having the the wherewithal to, to like what you do enough to really make a lasting effort. You know what I mean? If you're, if you don't like what you do if you're disengaged, if you're not showing passion in what you do, people will see it. And they will respond to it and to it. Collaboration. I think it's quite self explanatory the ability to work together as a team. I mean, most of the work that we do on a daily basis is in collaboration with somebody. So being able to set differences aside and work towards a common goal is certainly core to not only Nordea but to every business on this planet. And there was there's one more ownership ownership and this is of course, to me it's about taking accountability, assuming responsibility for the work that you do. I mean, there's nobody to blame but yourself if the work that you do is gone awry. I mean, if you don't have the proper information, ask for the proper information that's not available, figure out a different way. So, I mean, there's, there's no reason to point the blame to anybody, by yourself for the work that you do.

federica giuseppini 32:29

So which one of these four relates the most to your leadership experience?

Speaker 1 32:34

My leadership experience?

federica giuseppini 32:41

To your leadership approach.

Speaker 1 32:44

I mean, personally, I think I'm more closely aligned with the ownership value, but from a leadership perspective, and what I've exercised mostly in my leadership. Actually, you know, I would say ownership is also directly... has been directly brought down as a value for our team. I mean, to say it's a close, close second to sorry, collaboration is a close second to ownership, I would say ownership is going to be the, the main value. Because I do want people to I want my team members to understand that, you know, I can't, I can't micromanage you, I do not have the time or the ability to hold hands for 17 different people, I don't. So it's really on you to take responsibility for the work that you're assigned, or the teams that you're assigned to do. Because no one else is going to be looking over your shoulder and seeing if you're doing a good enough job. Oftentimes, you know, these things come in review sessions or iterations. But taking the initiative and the responsibility do that first draft or to go above and beyond and deliver more than you had promised is something that I'm really trying to push with the students here. Because I mean, when you do get a full time job, a lot of that responsibility is on you to make sure that you, you are doing what's required. People won't be looking over your shoulder and one day somebody is going to say, oh, and do you have this done for me? And you say, Oh, I didn't know I had to do it. Well... sucks. You should, you should know, because it's your job. But yeah, I think ownership is, is definitely the main value that I'm trying to preach. collab with collaboration are a very close second because a lot of the work that we do is in conjunction with each other.

federica giuseppini 35:00

How would you describe leadership at Nordea?

Speaker 1 35:12

I can only speak to what I'm exposed to. So that would be leaders within the technology organization. That would also be frank, the CEO and the communication that he conducts internally and externally. Generally, I would say the leadership hierarchies is flat only in the

sense that it's easy to communicate, to reach out and to talk to the leaders themselves. The decisions are very centralized. So in that sense, you know, leadership has strong mandate. And I guess a less inclusive ahmm less inclusive structure around how they make decisions, which is fine. I mean, you don't need 6000 people having a hand in decision making, you know what I mean? You want that to be, you need that to be centralized. So I think they've taken a good approach. Generally, you can see that the leadership team is very, they want they seem like they have the best interest of the organization at heart. And they do try to empathize with people when they're put in difficult situations. But I also think that they have a lot to do and that that is actually negatively impacting the communication that they're having with the rest of the organization. So now I'm talking about executive leadership in technology. When big changes are happening, like they have happened in the last few years, there needs to be a certain level of transparency and consistent communication to the rest of the organization. And it needs to be done in a good way. And the message needs to be clear. Oftentimes, that hasn't been the case and people become frustrated. People start freeing for their own jobs, their own livelihood. And, you know, that's, of course, not a situation that I'm sure this is not a situation that the leaders want to put their organization in. And it's probably not intentional, but that it happens sometimes. So I think in some aspects, the leadership is very, it's very good, but in some aspects, it can be improved, as well. But you do see improvements year over year in a lot of the base Line metrics that we measure ourselves on. So I mean, if we're just going by the numbers, it's effective.

federica giuseppini 38:08

But because my next question would have been, you know, if there was something that you would change, what would be like, Can you provide actually one practical example? one solid, concrete example?

Speaker 1 38:20

Something that I would change.... Yeah, I mean, you really see this culture of owning your own kingdom, so to speak. And it seems like it with a lot of the older leaders. I don't know if this is just a habit that they've picked up over the years, or if this is intentional, but a lot of them, you know, tend to hold their specialized knowledge. They're specialized there. There's subject matter specific information. And I don't know if this is because, you know, they they want to keep their competitive advantage with within the organization itself. But I really think that leaders could be better at making available, the information that they have. And not only the leader of anatomy leaders in this sense, also in terms of people who are leading teams, who hold specific knowledge, and that leaders should be trying to break down silos not create silos, in terms of making sure that the rest of the organization or other teams at least are aware of what these people are doing and how to provide transparency into certain processes or clarity into how to access certain tools or conduct certain exercises. I mean, the list is very long. In terms of you know, what information should be brought across, not top down. So I think I can maybe I can provide a specific example. Okay, let's say I'm a project manager. And I need to understand what the financial reporting process is for a project. That's very specific to a certain team in technology, who is really central and doing that reporting for almost all the technology. But of course, they need input from the different project managers in order to understand what the situation is. As a project manager, it's very difficult to find that information unless you know who to turn to. Unless you have somebody in your internal network who you can ask the question to Right, that information shouldn't be difficult to access, that information should be readily available and the process around financial reporting should be visible. And the requirements from the project manager should be readily available. There should be templates available as well, because we want that to be reported in a standardized way. But these types of things, you know, it's... it's something that I think maybe maybe it's just Nordea but something that we can improve on. And, you know, making sure and I'll and I'll say it again, making sure that we're doing things for the best interest for Nordea and not saying, How can I hold my leadership decision? How can I call my job?

federica giuseppini 41:42

Do you think this gets in the way of a good leadership in the sense of the one that you define yourself, just like with collaboration and ownership? This let's say, you know, this lack of transparency, the lack of good practices, standardized practices to share information, like knowledge sharing, right? Do you think they get in the way of leadership on a daily basis, like interpersonal relationship between a leader and an employee.

Speaker 1 42:28

I, I haven't really experienced that from my perspective. If I need information, and I approach my manager for that information, if she doesn't have it, she'll try to point me in the direction of where I can find that information. But this is the problem that you can't access that information right. With my team, I tried to do the same thing. I tried to make things as available as I can. And I think I mean, I would imagine that this is a problem in many, many companies, people trying to own their own kingdoms, so to speak, and trying to retain power, retain knowledge and make sure that that it's closed for the rest of the rest of the people because the way they do things might be better or different or more efficient, whatever. And if you can hold that competitive advantage you can, you can improve your position, right. And it makes sense that if somebody is doing something right in one area, that they are sharing that with another area.

federica giuseppini 43:39

That's exactly my class of knowledge management, it's human nature to think that you're going to lose your job if you start sharing what you know.

Speaker 1 43:49

Yeah, and I can I, from my perspective, I tend to think it's the exact opposite. If you show that you can share this good knowledge. I mean, you will do so much good for whatever organization you're in. And I think people will recognize that. I mean, I don't have proof to back that up. But that's my, that's my, that's my line of thinking.

federica giuseppini 44:12

That's how it works. Because, you know, knowledge is generated by other knowledge. So like, new knowledge comes from all knowledge. So, collaboration and sharing of knowledge creates just better and better and better. Exactly. You're never gonna be, you're never gonna lose your position, because you're sharing what you know, you're just gonna make it better and better for others to set and just for yourself as well, because you can have, you know, some inputs that you wouldn't have otherwise.

Speaker 1 44:37

Yeah, exactly. And, for instance, there's this gentleman in the CIO office, that is now utilizing a tool that previously unknown to him, because we had shown him what can be done with it. And he went ahead and ran with it and started implementing this for other use cases in the bank as well. So you know, we didn't we didn't build it for him or anything, but just showing him what it could do helped. Create value in different places and help automate other things and save man hours for the business.

federica giuseppini 45:19

That's really nice... to speed up a little bit because I want to do four more questions and an exercise.

Speaker 1 45:29

Yeah, I mean, I mean, I'm in no rush, so yeah.

federica giuseppini 45:37

So this thing Yeah, it's very informal. Please don't feel like um, I know, I didn't want to bring my computer but I couldn't find the place where I could print the questions. Anyway, so this being your first position, right? Is there something you wish you hadn't had before.

Speaker 1 46:14

I wish I'm gonna be honest with you. I think I transition pretty well into the leadership role. I think it was a natural, I think it's a position that I'm naturally inclined towards. But what I didn't do well at the beginning, that I wish someone had just told me outright, hey, make sure you have this, because it'll help you was was writing down what it is, but it's basically a logbook. So this is something that I didn't have for the first couple months. And then I had plds. So performance learning dialogues with the students actually in the first month, then I was a leader. So I had to assess performance my first month. That was a little range. And then I had one, two ones, I have monthly one to ones, with with individuals as well. And after those one to ones you know, I could see myself not remembering all of the details that we had spoken about in the pod is or what development actions we can take and things like that. Oh, this is not good, you know, this can't go on. So I, I wish I knew how important it was to actually take consistent notes on not only the conversations that you have with your team members, but also observable instances that you can see so I'll give you an example. Being being a leader, you also want to be giving fact based feedback. Yeah, or fact based reflections. And how do you do that? Well, you say, you needs to be specific and it needs to be related to a specific example or case. So when I see something in the office right here or something, and I think, oh, that could have been done better, you know, I'll write it down. I'll say on this date, this person did this and this where you could have done this on this, right? Or if they contrast if they'd done something really well. I'll also write that down and say on this date, you did this really well keep that up. But I wish I knew how important it was when I started to have a structured approach to people's, my my interaction with people and people.

federica giuseppini 48:54

You were saying that you know at the PLD you kind of assess your employees?

Speaker 1 49:01

it's performance and learning. Right? So...

federica giuseppini 49:04

So how do you assess their performance? What do you look at?

Speaker 1 49:09

Well, what I do is I reach out to all of the stakeholders that they might be involved with, and try to get an accurate view from the receiver end of how their work is actually being viewed and received. Is it of high quality? Is it timely? Do they exceed expectations? Did they? Did they fall short of expectations? And then I also tried to, I asked them to gather feedback themselves. And then I tried to basically match is what they were told the same thing as what I was told, and are they telling me what I was? are they telling me the same story that I was told by their stakeholders and usually, there's, you know, quite an overlap, which is good. Of course, you're gonna have different views from different sides sometimes. But it's also a large part of being a student and assessing student performances, how they are viewed and how their work is viewed by their task manager. I employ some tasks and I deliver, I distribute some tasks. But a lot of these students have their own specialized applications, their own special assignments. So, sometimes it's difficult for me to assess performance, because I'm not necessarily in contact with tangible deliveries that they do on a daily basis. But during our one to ones during our plds, I often get the students to show me or explained to me, you know, what, what have you been doing? If it's not directly, if I'm not directly in contact with it, and then it becomes a question of, you know, what is good look like and I really have To take then the the feedback that I get and see, okay. Are these people happy with it? If yes, then your performances, you know, meeting or

exceeding expectations based on what that feedback is. And yeah. And then I think that's how I would measure performance. I mean, it's a little difficult as a student because you're not in the office so much and the expectations are different as well.

federica giuseppini 51:32

So you do it. So it's more practical, right? There was more... you try to be objective, right?

Speaker 1 51:40

I try to be objective. But I think even when, like when you're assessing performance in this way, based on other people's perception of the work that you do, it's always going to be founded are based on exactly that perception. Right.

federica giuseppini 52:01

So, of course, but then you don't really look at your own, like you said before, your own culture. Right. So about ownership and collaboration, the first two values, if we want to call them like that you don't really look at that when you are assessing your employees?

Speaker 1 52:19

No, I do look at that as well. That's a good point. No, I do talk about. I do try to assess people on how I view them working with one another. How have you been working with other people in the organization? how I view them taking initiative for certain things? Of course, there's people who are raising their hands for a lot of tasks. You know, there's people who are staying quiet, people who are assigning themselves to tasks in backlogs and people who are not. And that in itself tells me Okay, these people are really you know, putting their best foot forward. These people are not or maybe you know, these people just don't have Time to assign themselves to things in the backlog. And then that's a conversation that I needed to have with them as well. Yeah, but if for instance, if I see, and but this is observational as well, right, and this is why I try to have this log book that I was mentioning so that I can have these discussions based on on facts, right, that can say, Oh, you know, in this situation you did, you did a great job of, of employing the collaboration value by reaching out to a team member to see if they needed help with something while you had downtime, something simple like that. And, you know, identifying those and talking about those, it doesn't force that behavior as well. If I say to you Federica I really liked the way that you were taking the initiative to help your team members. You're gonna say, Oh, thanks. That's That's great. And then you'll probably continue to do that when you have the chance. If I don't say anything and it goes unrecognized, then of course, that's you're not reinforcing good behavior. And of course, contrast it with that the poor behavior is so.

federica giuseppini 52:20

So it's both about positive and negative reinforcement.

Speaker 1 54:23

Yeah. And it's also about tangible proof like measuring tangible deliveries and also measuring the intangibles. How are you as a person? How are you fitting in with the environment here? How are you living the team values? And also, you know, a subset of your own values, how are you putting those forward in the work environment? And how is that impacting your work and the people around you?

federica giuseppini 54:51

That's actually my own curiosity. Do you see in the students yourself that they are different values, like so it shows in a way of working.

Speaker 1 55:03

Yeah, definitely there are people who mesh more with the team values as a whole, right? There's, there's people who fit into the culture seamlessly. And there's people who need a push to conform to the culture, I guess you could say. And it's not that you can really push people to conform, you want to reinforce certain values, yes. But it also needs to be stated that at that point, like, Hey, sorry, not stated, but it needs to be made clear to the individual that it's okay that you are and as long as you're fulfilling x y, z, you know what I mean, not everybody's going to be able to fit in seamlessly to a specific culture.

federica giuseppini 55:53

This is some of the challenges of being a leader I guess try to look for people with a culture of the organization but yet bringing their own personal take on things.

Speaker 1 56:09

Exactly. So it's, it's really catering to the individual. Okay.

federica giuseppini 56:17

So what's the biggest challenge you have faced while leading people?

Speaker 1 56:27

The biggest challenge that I've had, I think, is actually related to what we were just talking about. So trying to get somebody who is inherently introverted. Inherently, you know, maybe a little shy. To start to, to begin to challenge things to begin to collaborate, have their own... have their own initiative to begin to do these things without being instructed It's hard to change somebody's behavior. Or it's hard to change somebody's personal nature. So when the personal nature is, is exactly that, then it's difficult to push them out of that shell and say, Hey, you know, you need to challenge things when when you see that they're wrong, you can't just, you know, finish this and know that these problems are, are visible, but not saying anything or be because you don't want to disagree with somebody or not reach out to team members to help because you're shy like it. It's really hard to get that person to bring to to employ those values. And it's, at this point, you know, you kind of realize as a leader, I can't be treating everybody the same. Because certain people need a different focus certain people need to, you need to push different pressure points with different people. And I've made it a little progress. But it's it is difficult and it's a learning for me as well. Yeah, and you need to understand, you know, when when do I take this person aside and have a tough conversation or when do I try to be supportive? So being able to understand, and, and, I guess, have that intuition as a leader, it's a very personal thing, right? So you need it's not just as a leader, as a person, intuition that you can employ with these people and and try to get the most out of them and try to make sure that they're, that you're reinforcing the behaviors in a way that responds that resonates with them.

federica giuseppini 59:02

Are you looking for more employees?

Speaker 1 59:09

Well, our goal, my goal is 23 at the end of 2020. And that's in two countries. So we would be almost equal people in both Denmark and Poland.

federica giuseppini 59:26

What what do you think your limit is? how many people can you lead well at this point? I think we're getting close at that point. Yeah. There's some there's some times where I just don't have enough time in the day. You know, there's other times where as a leader, if you can put your feet up on the desk, and things run smoothly, then you've done your job. But it never stays that way. People there is always like some everyday there is one thing I Maybe maybe a person is going through a breakup. And you need to know.

Speaker 1 1:00:06

Exactly. And you do deal with a lot of personal shit, as well. But it comes with the drama. And it's actually part of being a good leader is understanding what what are these people going through because that could directly impact performance at work. And you also want to be flexible in the sense that, you know, if somebody is going through something difficult, you want to notice that you can help them add work, whether it's maybe adjust the workload a little bit for a short period or a reprioritization of tasks or whatever it might be, to help them through whatever they're going through. But that also rules into this notion of honesty, right? And you as a leader need to be approachable in that sense. And people need to feel comfortable coming to you with those types of things. Otherwise...

federica giuseppini 1:01:08

Okay, so two quick questions. Choose three objectives that a leader should have.

Speaker 1 1:01:37

So descriptive words. Yeah. So three, three adjectives for leader. Only three. That's okay. I'm going to say confident, honest and knowledgeable.

federica giuseppini 1:02:32

Three adjectives that a leader should never have/be?

Speaker 1 1:03:05

a leader should never be self serving. A leader should never be manipulative. Number three complacent, leaders should never be complacent.

federica giuseppini 1:03:44

Forgive my ignorance, what does complacent mean?

Speaker 1 1:03:47

complacency is when you become comfortable in the status quo. Yeah, I think that as a leader, you know, there's also always something to be improved and always something to work on. And as soon as you become complacent and you say I've done enough you'd be surprised how fast things fall apart.

federica giuseppini 1:04:35

Can you tell me of a bad leadership experience you had as an employee?

Speaker 1 1:05:20

Does it have to be mine or can it be somebody I know?

federica giuseppini 1:05:24

Should be yours.

Speaker 1 1:05:41

I can speak from experience, but it wasn't a Nordea. I was working as a stonemason and my boss it was A small company. And of course, he's running tight margins. And he wanted me to work extra hours for for free, basically. And I was young, I was 20. And I just thought, Yeah, well, no, this is what I'm supposed to do. So this is what I'll do. But it ended up being a lot of extra hours that I didn't get compensated for and seeing what the other guys in the team as well. And they were all complaining. Some of them are close to the financials, so they could see that Yeah, he probably could have afforded to give us that pain. But he didn't. So that was a time that I really saw that people felt demotivated, unvalued and valued selfless selfishness.

federica giuseppini 1:07:28

So just so why don't you just what do you do some perspectives can younger generation bring to the leadership table? (table of survey). You can tell me which one of those even younger generation is in students in this case. And also how it would transform into leadership their leadership style.

Speaker 1 1:08:02

Okay, I think the younger generation really has a greater need for flexibility. More and more people are being given the option to, to not only work from home, but also have some flexible working hours as well. People want to come in at 10 and work till six or seven. I mean, let them you know what I mean. But I mean, there's I see that being an increasing trend. I guess among the people that I'm working with the least is the need for flexibility. bring to the table like how do you

federica giuseppini 1:08:39

But what do they bring to the table? in terms of change of leadership? Right. So you think that flexibility, you know, being one of those, that means that maybe they're gonna be flexible leaders? What does that mean for the organization?

Speaker 1 1:08:53

I would say that I do see a lot of I think what they could bring is a lot of encouragement. So, for my experience, younger generation really is for seeing each other succeed. They celebrate each other's successes and they're not spiteful, you know, when other people succeed, and they might be taking a different path. I would also say creativity. You, maybe I think this just goes for young generations in, in every time period really because you see people coming out of school learning all of these new and innovative technologies or ways to solve problems and then applying that to the professional life as well. Things that people who have been working for 4030 years, probably haven't learned or haven't even stumbled across. So creativity Think is something that the younger generation can bring for sure. Also enthusiasm, young people are excited to start working, you know what I mean? They're excited to prove themselves. They're they're excited to make a positive impact. And sometimes you do see with older, older leaders that they become complacent. They, they think what they're doing is enough. When, you know, sometimes it isn't. So I think that having somebody who's willing to show up every day and give 100% is, is only going to do wonders for a company.

federica giuseppini 1:10:42

That's gonna stay. It's not only like a temporary thing, the enthusiasm? Do you think it's actually a generation trait?

Speaker 1 1:10:48

I think it stays for younger people in general. And I would imagine that if I listen to these words, in 30 years, I might look back and say, Oh, I should take my Advice. So I think it's just a good thing to have for for corporations to infuse a little bit of young blood in their, in their, in their environment. I think there's is there another one charismatic, I mean, not specifically related to the younger generation, supportive and empowering as well? I mean, I, I would say a lot of that psycho is in line with the encouragement aspect.

federica giuseppini 1:11:44

So if you think of Nordea and new generation, right. How do you think the bank gonna change if like, imagine all millennials on top leadership positions, how would the bank look like with the leadership?

Speaker 1 1:12:11

Honestly, I don't know if it would be a good or a bad thing. I think that... I honestly don't know if if we would achieve as good results if we had everybody as a millennial leader. I mean, when

they're leaving, they're less experienced, too. I think the values are such that we do still have something to learn from the older generation in terms of achieving results and being results oriented. I mean, we do want to see the fruits of our labor as millennials. But the and I think there can be a good symbiosis between the two, you know, but I think the millennials have been more I want to say softer approach to people leadership. But but but they're still good leaders in the sense that they do want to see material. Material deliveries, material results from from the work that they're doing. So how would your day look like if millennials were fulfilling all of the leadership positions? It's It's hard to say. It's really hard to say. I don't know if I can answer that one.

federica giuseppini 1:13:56

Which one do you think of those are the ones that the leadership under they are Like how your top leadership so older generation are missing.

Speaker 1 1:14:04

They're missing. Effective communication is probably one. I think I mentioned that before. And this, you know, you can see examples of when people in the organization become frustrated and express their frustration in town halls or in emails or whatever the forum might be. But you can see that is lacking. Maybe it's just these leaders specifically. But I mean, those leaders are all of a certain age group, you can say, right mister generation. I would say passion and empathy, they they, they exhibit for sure. Accountability, I would actually say that they're very good at Taking responsibility for whichever area flexibility i think is something to be improved upon. Mind you, leaders at the top level, they're always on, you know what I mean? So, when they're always on nails, we expect those under them to be always on. And that's just not how the younger generation views work. They don't view it is that important, or at least not the majority of them. Not so important that it should take up every single hour of the day. So I think that could be improved a little bit. Motivation, confident, goal oriented, inspirational. They try, they tried to be inspirational. I'll give them that. Encouraging, I think, I think that as well, that that they are, were rather encouraging and they get People the opportunities to, to prove themselves. Creative might be a dimension where they could improve a little bit. It's hard to say exactly what I would want them to be more creative with. But it seems as though and maybe it's just because I'm working in a bank. You know, it's a very traditional sector. That's we're applying traditional or off the shelf approaches to a lot of the problems that we have. Doozy gastic, empowering, supportive, I think empowering. They actually do quite a good job at this. I mean, they don't want to do all the work themselves, supporting charismatic, acts based on our culture and values. I think they they say that they do. Do they actually employ those values? I think to a large extent, yes. But I mean, nobody's perfect.

federica giuseppini 1:17:00

Do you think that's more generation based? Or do you think that's every

Speaker 1 1:17:04

No, I don't think it's generation based. I think it's just human nature, just to make mistakes.

federica giuseppini 1:17:13

What is the new generation is lacking?

Speaker 1 1:17:44

I think, perhaps a little bit of accountability. I mean, again, I'm speaking from the experience of leading students, who really should have almost no formal accountability. You know, Because the work that they're doing is on the behest of others. I don't know but I don't know if I can say that actually effective being responsible for what you do unable to give a satisfactory reason for it. Like your dream team right now, like if you look at the students, right, yeah. So like what? have doors will make you the strongest, most perfect and awesome team that will deliver

hundred percent or 200%. Actually, I'm gonna see what what my team is lacking in general in what I think is confidence. And what our generation is lacking, I think is a little bit of confidence. I mean, we go through so much school, we learn as much as we can, and then we get to, you know, the professional life. A lot of us are unsure of our abilities and we're thrown into rooms with people who have been in The workforce for 30 plus years. And who am I to say what's right? compared to this guy who has been, you know, been working for forever. But when realistically, we do have good ideas, and we do have valid opinions. And I think people really need to overcome that. That mental hurdle of you know what I'm saying isn't good enough or what's my opinion matter? confidence, I think is something that could be improved. For me, yeah. Yeah, but I would put that for myself as well. So goal oriented, person or team works hard to achieve good results. Their tasks that they've been given, I would say that they're pretty goal oriented in that description. I think that's it. I think they do employ most of those actually. I'm fairly pleased with them.

federica giuseppini 1:20:28

I was gonna ask you about the leadership training,

Speaker 1 1:20:31

training, leadership training. Yeah, just had it. I just got my certificate. Like, like it's like a school. Yeah, it's like the leadership pipeline Institute or something. You can see it on my LinkedIn. What questions do you have? Well, it was more like,

federica giuseppini 1:20:55

Do you think that it actually helps you? Is that effective?

Speaker 1 1:21:01

I think the leadership training helped me because I was able to speak with other leaders and spar about problems that I was having as a leader and see how they would approach it. So I think it was helpful in that sense. I mean, you do get a lot of tools that you can use as well. frameworks for handling different situations, frameworks for performance evaluation, frameworks for feedback, tools for all sorts of things that help you structure the way that you do your work as a leader, and all of the things that surround development and evaluation, those types of things.

federica giuseppini 1:21:44

So in some ways, is more practical.

Speaker 1 1:21:48

Yeah, it's very practical. The training is very practical.

federica giuseppini 1:21:56

I wanted to talk to you about some all day so they don't talk about it. models, like just leadership as in like, how leadership is switching transactional? Like, have you ever heard about transactional? And transitional?

Speaker 1 1:22:15

Yes, yes, yes. But we don't learn about. I mean, I've learned about that in school. Yeah. But, I mean, the leadership courses that I've attended at Nordea are very much oriented around how can you serve your team? So I think in that sense, as well, they try to really push the servant leadership mindset, which in my mind is the right approach as a leader. Let your team do the work that they need to do and help them achieve the results that they want to achieve that are required.

1:22:56

So Well, I know this, what's your name?

1:22:58

Teresa?

federica giuseppini 1:22:58

How old are you?

Speaker 1 1:23:02

this year, no turning 27 this year 26 now. So I would be 27 in November. But I'm 26.

federica giuseppini 1:23:43

Is there something I should have asked about leadership, something super important that you think that you're like, why she's not asking me this? Because they really want to talk about it or complain or be unhappy or be super happy.

1:24:11

You know if anything comes to mind, I will let you know. I think it also depends on the scope of your thesis.