

The Future of Work podcast is a weekly show where Jacob has in-depth conversations with senior level executives, business leaders, and bestselling authors around the world on the future of work and the future in general. Topics cover everything from AI and automation to the gig economy to big data to the future of learning and everything in between. Each episode explores a new topic and features a special guest.

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Jacob 00:56

Hello, everyone, thanks for joining us for another episode of the future of work today I'm joined by Manfred Kets de Vries. He's the author of many, many books on leadership. He's also a psychoanalyst, and he's a distinguished professor of leadership development and organizational change at INSEAD. Manfred, thank you for joining me

Manfred 01:17

Very happy to be here.

Jacob 01:19

So I have many, many questions for you. But before I jump in any of the leadership stuff I was reading that you were the first fly fisherman in outer Mongolia, you're a member of the New York Explorers Club. And in your spare time, you are in the rain forest or the savannas of Central and South Africa, the Siberian tiger, suey cry, Kamchatka, the Pamir and Altai Mountains. I can't even pronounce some of the other ones in the Arctic Circle. So you kind of sound like you're a modern day Explorer.

Manfred 01:58

Actually, when I was a kid, I wanted to be an explorer. But there was not an explorer unless you want to go to the moon. So I decided that at least I can try to explore people's minds, at the same time can still go to crazy places. So and by the way to be the world champion, which your timing, which isn't very big, actually the biggest route in the world, it was not so difficult, because I was the first fly fisherman, so whatever I caught, I was the world champion. So there's so much for my championship didn't last for very long. I mean, I think in the Americans game, and they took over, they discovered that, to catch that fish is quite exciting in those rivers in outer Mongolia.

Jacob 02:39

Yeah, you definitely sound like you, you do some fun, you sound like you'd be a fun person to hang out with, just you know, outside of work, just to follow you around for a little bit and see kind of the things, the adventures that you go on. So I want to talk a little bit about how did you get involved with the work that you're doing now? So maybe we can go way back when, before you get started in this space of leadership. So take us back to your early days.

Manfred 03:05

Now, it's actually I'm not the youngest anymore. In my early days, you know, I was born during the Second World War in Holland, my grandparents and my mother had a lot of people in the cover because of the Nazis. And I remember that after the war is you're too young for that they were the Nuremberg trials where the war criminals were tried and, and it has an enormous effect on me and asking myself, Why do people become that way? And what can be done to prevent it?

Manfred 03:39

So I got a early interest in leadership, however, I started studying economics, and the University of Amsterdam. And then I went to Harvard. And then I got something to dispel off a man called Abraham's lesnick, who was a professor of organizational behavior. Actually, he will never say that because he had to fight his Organizational Behavior department, and also psychoanalyst, and he got, and basically, I felt that the way organizational behavior was studied, there was not enough attention paid to people, there was a lot of unstructured strategy. I mean, I've told Harvard Business Schools a major production center for McKinsey people. And so to bring the person back into the organization, I felt you needed more, it would be good to visit department psychiatry.

Manfred 04:26

So I guess I became a professor at McGill University in Montreal. And at the same time, I did my training at the Department of Psychiatry. And so so I always say I have two hats, you know, that try to combine the dismal science, which is Kane's description of economics, with the impossible profession, which is for to escape from psychoanalysis. And even though it sounds sort of esoteric, it has helped me in particularly a very complex situations, which you certainly find, I think about 70% of businesses are controlled by families and so I get quite involved in many Family dramas also. And if you have the family together, at the moment, as is the case, I mean consulting to a number of family businesses. And if they don't have their act together, 1000s of people will lose their job.

Manfred 05:13

So that's, and in the beginning to keep on babbling a little bit, I was very interested in pathology. So I looked at what could go wrong among leaders. But at one point in time, I became appointed by the dean as to set up a Leadership Center at a Global Leadership Center at INSEAD. INSEAD is this funny place, which has a campus campus in France, in Singapore, Abu Dhabi, now it has something in San Francisco, apparently, a small thing, I've not been there. But anyhow. And then, and the original idea, by the way, was to after the Second World War, it was set up to bring peace to the world. The idea was when you have people from different cultures together, Germans, French, English, Americans is less likely to fight. So that's the original idea. Of course, now, it's, it's somewhat different.

Manfred 06:02

Anyhow, when I was appointed as the global leadership director, I realized I had to make good people even better. So that's the reason I got quite involved in leadership development. And I have been running for too long, and probably the dinosaur of our school, a program called leadership in which I take around 21 facing executives, and try to try to create tipping points for them, you know, try to have to make certain choices. And my fantasy is that those 21 people are probably every year, something like responsible for something like 100,000--150,000 people, if I can make them a little more humane

and effective, it might have an effect on the way people perceive they're the people who work there. You know, I mean, you think about, you know, you must have seen the statistics of Gallup that 85% of people don't feel engaged worldwide.

Jacob 06:57

Yep

Manfred 06:58

And that's a terrible statistic. And so, and you seem to have only one life, unless you believe in reincarnation, I feel that you should make the best out of it. So that's what my focus is. Now, my focus has been on leaders, partially because not only mean that other people are important, but because they fail, if you can, men, if you can manage them to change them a little bit, it might have an effect on the rest of the organization. So that's a nutshell some of the things.

Manfred 07:23

And I guess I've been trying to be how I started the program at our school, which is was originally called consulting and coaching for change. So how to help people change the mass of the program. And so I have been trying to, and particularly got very involved, which I found very useful to get better corporate culture is team coaching, I have nothing against one on one coaching, but if you want Bang, bang for the buck, team coaching second to none, so give me a somewhat neurotic organization. And I can make something out of it. I have, of course, in certain situations where I have to give up. But But I try as I've seen, for example, I've done quite some work in the Russia and there have been a number of Darwinian soups there. Or it was very hard to

Jacob 08:12

I speak Russian.

Manfred 08:14

You speak Russian? I wish I would say because I mean many, I have a health fan club and Garcia, actually, I'm the Patriarch program at the Higher School of Economics in in Moscow, which is an massively program of psychoanalysis and management consulting. So I'm the one who actually originally started giving the kickstart. So how do you speak Russian, how come

Jacob 08:41

My family's from Russia, they're from the Republic of Georgia, former USSR.

Manfred 08:46

I see. I've been in Georgia. I've been actually spent quite some time in many times, Armenia, because of some Russian friends of mine help, trying to help to change the country. So I've been now,

Jacob 08:59

One day I'll make my way to Armenia haven't been there yet. So one of the things that I wanted to talk to you about today, and this was something that you wrote almost 10 years ago now, it is the eight archetypes of leadership. And so before we go through the what those eight archetypes are actually

want to ask you Has anything changed since then, since those nine years we see COVID Black Lives met, you know, so much has changed in the world. Are those archetypes still true? Or is there a new one? That's, that's popped out?

Manfred 09:33

Actually, I started with other archetypes. I one of my first books was the neurotic organization, in which I present a number of other archetypes which is actually based, of course in psychiatry. But the reason I can tell you it's an anecdote I was asked by a the chairman or the executive chairman of a large company, to, to write a report about why this What used to be a small company has been so successful? And what is that about that culture which made him so successful?

Manfred 10:06

So I traveled around and talk to different people, I had done some workshops with them to also serve as the senior executive. So I had some idea about the company that that's the reason was asked, and I totally bought, and then I met the person in hotel, the chairman. And he started to speak to me, I've met him before but this time, he really started to speak in re-associate and I couldn't understand him and not not a complete idiot. So I started myself, how does he communicate to his people? And then I mentioned to him, you know, one of your, you know, one of your people who is running a company now at the moment in Milwaukee, he has cleaned up the mess there. And you should say thank you. He said, Thank you, I instruct me, I can do it.

Manfred 10:47

But I realize yet and VP, human resources, who would run around the world and say, I love you, I love you. I love you that I met him in Davos at the World Economic Forum. And behind there was a tall lady working, who was SVP of communications. So I realized what he was really good at was strategy. He wasn't he was a strategist, he was looking at the world and said, What can I do and also dealmaker those words to civic contributions? So it's certainly to think about and I talked to a number of my particular my colleagues and strategy, what they see a certain archetypes. So this means, of course, you know, things are fluid. And but I developed some kinds of eight archetypes. And I developed a questionnaire which, when I, when I started to introduce coaching to all the programs at our school, coaching is expensive. It's not mass production, I can talk to 1000 people, that's possible. But if you have coaching if five, six people at a time, and you go coaching, and so they needed some kind of kickstart.

Manfred 11:48

And as a result, I developed a number of a 360 degree that times are still fairly new, I have been the most most useful has been the global executive leadership mirror, but also the leadership architect questionnaire. And also I did another one, which is organization, cultural audit, which is the most complicated one. But I saw my coaches start to use that to have some, they have some material to talk. Because in my beginning, for example, in my leadership seminar, people would tell me that they were God's gift to mankind or humankind. And then I would sometimes visit the organization, it turned out to be Genghis Khan. So you have you need to have a sense how people think about them. Of course, they think this has it has its limitations in the first place, of course, so the self assessment I didn't

believe very much in because of the social desirability factor. And then certain cultures people are in the beginning, but it was very difficult to get people to give feedback.

Manfred 12:43

For example, in France, a CEO is called PDG-- president Director General, and you only get feedback down, he doesn't want feedback up. So to get people to give feedback, it was very wary. So it depends on the, I mean you know about those same things, it depends on the corporate culture you have, if you if people feel they can have have certain amount of voice because always I mean, organizations, as you know, are always containers of depressive and paranoid anxiety. It's always there. And so how to create as, as you talked about the top executive teams sense of safety, you know, a sense of trust, and those things are very delicate flow.

Jacob 13:23

Well, Andy Grove, the former CEO of Intel said only the Paranoid survive. So there is that paranoia in every company. I want to start with and go through these eight archetypes. The first one is the strategist. So let's talk a little bit about the strategist archetype. What is it, maybe you can give some context around what that particular archetype is good at, because I'm sure everybody who's listening and watching this, we're gonna have a bunch of people in different archetypes. So it'd be helpful for people to be able to identify who they are, and what that means for their leadership style, what they might be good at what maybe they're not so good at. So any advice or context starting strategist?

Manfred 14:05

My god what a question, as you said, how many years ago, I mean, I've written 20 other books. So I've been moving onwards and forwards. But I mean, if people are really interested in it, my advice would be, I think the Harvard Business Review a little article about it, just go on the web, you find lots of things about strategist, it's actually the descriptions are fairly self explanatory. What does the strategist do? He he defined strategy, what direction to go, what are certain would be good. I mean, I the types of things like strategies dealmaker coach, I remember entrepreneur actually intrapreneur innovator communicator so sighs I think I don't remember completely I think that is probably I mentioned, and you what you can make you do is when you develop this 360 questionnaire, you fill it out, and you get a spiderweb and you can see, you can see where you are

Manfred 15:01

And then the trick becomes, as a team, you can see what is missing in the team. I remember once I was working with an investment bank, and was growing quite dramatically, and they were very good strategies, they were very good in strategy and also great dealmakers, that was the standard. But nobody was developing any people, it just was to coaching parts. And so that's I think it gives us I mean, it's big, I mean, give given Jacob it's the beginning of a discussion, that's the way I look at all those years. I mean, it's not written in stone, and it can be used very badly, sometimes I feel that you use those questionnaires. And I feel that the person fills that out, and other people fill it out. You know, it needs to be debriefed in a very constructive manner.

Manfred 15:44

Otherwise, people you get they get this, I've seen it too many times they get this questionnaire they get the results is that you are shit. So thank you very much, what now, you know, so Well, to me a developmental plan or organic organization, say control oriented, you have the HR director, having all those data there as a kind of stick you can use against you. So, so I'm, I'm basically the, the I tried to make the titles very self explanatory. And if you if people are interested in it, just, you know, just fill out the questionnaire. I mean, you can see where you are. That's that would be my general, general advice. It was a very popular article by the way in the Harvard Business Review.

Jacob 16:25

I'm sure. So the first, the first like attire that you had on there, as you mentioned, was the strategist. And this is the person who creates the vision, the strategic direction of the business. But a lot of people would say that this is the responsibility of every leader. So can you be a leader and not have some of this archetype in you?

Manfred 16:45

Sure. I mean, I remember I'd worked with him was a bank, and the bank was in bad shape. I mean, they actually because of certain irregularities, they had to fire quite a number of the top group. And so they brought in an outsider, who was a great people manager, and he was really a coach, and he really rebuild it. But he was not a strategist. And he knew that. And so he has people who me Actually, he had quite a few people from Boston Consulting Group, and McKinsey at the time, to me to get the strategic function in place.

Manfred 17:19

But he was the one who kept the video keep it kept equilibrium after this, explain our basic man slaughter have taken place on the top top executives, group actually what I think something like 30 had to leave because of certain scandals, so of course, but the question is, it's very important that when I looked at leadership, pathology, what are the things which can go home in the first place? I think for 600 years before Christ, there was a man called Tallis of militants, you probably never heard of him. But he was one of the sages of ancient Greece. And he was asked what is the most difficult thing in the world? And you know, the answer is know thyself, there was also hitting the Temple of Apollo in ancient Greece. So he actually also made another comment, which I don't believe is true. He was also asked what is the easiest thing in the world, he said, give advice.

Manfred 18:12

So that's sometimes you know, that's not really what it's all about. But now, many executives don't know themselves. They don't know what their strengths and their weaknesses are. And that is something which this leadership architect questionnaire can help them a little bit with, although the other questionnaire I developed, the global executive leadership mirror might be actually more detailed about certain things, or they can have some sense of their strengths and weaknesses.

Jacob Morgan 18:36

Self-awareness

Manfred 18:37

Yeah, and the other thing, of course, is which is, which I have been writing about quite extensively is that many executives self destruct, they get too full of themselves. That is, you know, the element of narcissism, which I've been writing about over and over again. And of course, America and America has no shown and has been a role model in showing how narcissism works, which is, like nice for the rest of the world can see it.

Jacob 19:02

Did you have any stories or examples? And you don't need to mention any executives or titles, but have you seen this actually happened where an executive gets into a position of power and then they just explode themselves?

Manfred 19:17

Over and over again. I mean, it's a fake funny combination, because you need to be Jacob, as you know, you need to be somewhat narcissistic, to do what you do. I mean, if you're not be somewhat narcissist, you wouldn't be where you are. So this is great motivation, as you know, it's a gesture, achievement orientation, things like that. The problem is, you need to have a balance. And when you have the need of certain organizations, when you have the private airplanes, you have the private elevators, the private dining rooms, you so you have to the disposition, and you have to position and slowly and gradually it goes to your head, and you slowly start to surround yourself with people who tell you what you want to hear.

Manfred 19:57

You know, you start to live in an echo chamber because people Question you do really, really liked it, of course, some people can become narcissistic personality disorder. And as I was trying to say, not very subtly, we have been living for a while there's this kind of example for a long time, which is, visuals have been the, the surprise of the rest of the world look at that particular situation, but there's not a story. But so, you know, some people have maybe a good partner, they can tell you, you know, Jacob, you're full of shit. And that's actually is very helpful, you know, thumbs to my wife gives me that kind of feedback. And that keeps him grounded. But other people don't get divorced his wife, his wife, you know, they have enough is enough, I bought a cheerleader.

Manfred 20:45

So that is I think, I think it's a it's a very important factor element of, you know, this kind of Icarus saying that you start to fly too high and you suck, you crash, you burn your wings. The other thing, of course, that what I have found that many executives, don't know, don't know that people coming back, also the archetype, they have no idea how to get the best out of people. And one of the things I always noticed when I focus on when my CEO recycling seminar is not the title, by the way, it's four weeks over a year. And after the first module, people have meaningful conversations with their people that key people they never had that they remember, having a better sense of them, some people are having high maintenance, some people have a low maintenance, and to have a better sense what all about.

Manfred 21:33

And of course, that also comes into relationship to designing a team. And most top executive teams in my experience are unnatural act, they don't work very well, because of the power dimension there. And so that's what I was saying earlier, give me a somewhat neurotic executive team. And I can make something out of it. Although I always want to do that. Before I do it. I, I do what I call a leadership audit, which is sunspace, sophisticated, Jacob Isn't it just I talk to all the people of the team and get a get a sense of the elephant in the room, you know, whatever it is, and so get a little bit of a sense of it. And then I asked myself, Can I do anything here or it's such a Darwinian soup, that I mean, I have to do an I have to do something else, it's not going to work. They're too they're too crazy.

Jacob 22:19

The second archetype that I already so fascinating stories, I mean, I love I love everything that you're saying. And people who are watching are also getting very positive comments, too. So the second archetype that you have on there is the Change Catalyst. And this is somebody who loves the turnaround situation. So they love messy situations, they like to rebuild things, they create new organizational blueprints. And I think we've seen a couple of these types of people in history, right, where a company isn't doing well. And they bring in a new CEO who's a quote unquote, turnaround specialist. So for this type of person, so for somebody who's listening, if this is the type of leader they are, can you only thrive in an environment where there's mess and chaos? What if everything is calm? And you're just leading a small team? Can you still thrive in that kind of environment? Or should you purposely cause problems everywhere?

Manfred 23:10

They're dangerous, they're sure the answer the question yourself, they can be quite dangerous because they get bored. And nothing is worse than a bored senior executives. And bored senior executives, they usually hire consultants, and investment banks, and they start to play the Pac Man game and things like that to create lots of excitement. That's what they're dangerous. So those people, you know, you mean, in, in some countries, you have what's called entry managers, they know exactly what they're good at. They come in, they come for a year. So whatever the time period is, clean up the mess and move on. Because they know when you create when you're in a stable state. It's, it's hopeless. They are there they go to do crazy things to get some they need. They're an adrenaline junkies, that's what they are. So and without it, forget it, they start to provoke things. You know, that's what I was talking about this, this bored CEOs are dangerous. They are and, and unfortunately,

Jacob 24:11

Stoking the fire all the time trying to cause problems. Okay, so the next one we have here is the transactor. And this one is really about the deal making, as you say, these executives, they're dealmakers, they're skilled at identifying and tracking new opportunities, they thrive on negotiations. This seems like a very powerful and useful type of archetype to have in any organization, maybe somebody who's running the sales team, somebody who's running a marketing team right.

Manfred 24:40

Now it's in a way they have some elements also have the I had an executive or a member and became a slogan among him and deal a day keeps the doctor away. So he had to make deals otherwise again,

become also this boredom. And so he would buy companies, but eventually I think I was also somewhat instrumental to have somebody running behind him, which was actually an ex McKinsey person, to be the administrator to have to train some time, because that was not his interest. He was extremely messy in that respect. I mean, I want to stress and emphasize, Jacob, leadership, as you know, as a team sport. It's a team sport, although I had recently I had an atom query about co leadership.

Manfred 25:28

And it that's a very, I mean, it would actually theoretically you can think about you have a team of two people, it would be better. But unfortunately, given many executives, narcissistic disposition, it doesn't work well, in the business organization. I've seen it in, in the medical setting. So you see, often the administrative person and the medic person will find a duo. I've seen that sometimes work in family business, where you have brothers or usually brothers who know each other quite well. And they are very complimentary. But in a business setting, it's fairly rare that you find on paper, you find the complementarity, for example, I interviewed two co leaders.

Manfred 26:12

And I basically, I talked to the chairman and said, Listen, you're going to lose a lot of money. They both say competent people, but there's no trust. And they sabotage each other. It's not working, it looks perfect on paper, perfect on paper from a design point of view. But given the personality didn't work. Anyhow, I'm just, I just, I had an association about co leadership because it's so rare in business operations,

Jacob 26:36

I think. So the one company that comes to mind didn't Oracle, it was an Oracle or HP I think it was Oracle, they had a CEO and a co CEO, I believe.

Manfred 26:46

SAP had something like that SAP had something like it have. No, usually it doesn't work because of its, you know, it's very hard for many people. Now, this the statement, the addictiveness of power, you know, power corrupts absolute power corrupts absolutely. of Lord Acton, you know, we think quickly, it's look at, and we I always hurt animals. And so, in case of anxiety, we look to a leader. And, and of course, who is going to be the one. So it's, there's always this, you'll have this pecking order. And you know, what's the alpha who's going to be the alpha person? And that's, that's the deal. And, you know, the, the faithful leaders who are Buddhists who don't want any power, and so it's always you only may only be worried when people really want so eager to get power, that might not be the best person to pick? It's a it's a balance.

Jacob 27:50

Got it. Okay, so the next one we have here after transactor is the builder. So this is the leader who's more they have that entrepreneurial mentality. They create, you said, these executives dream of creating something and have the talent and determination to make their dream come true. Are these types of leaders good in both small companies and big companies?

Manfred 28:12

Yeah, that depends on the amount of space you give them. I mean, those are really sometimes what's called intrapreneur. I mean, basically, when you think about a typical entrepreneur, I mean, I actually my decent doctoral dissertation at Harvard was on entrepreneurs. Long ago. But based on what I found out, they actually most of them are allergic to authority. That's to easily find that they're doing their own thing. Now, I look at you, you do your own thing, don't you? So how, how is it being somebody who's hanging over you? Would you like it? I don't know. I don't know you, but it might not.

Jacob 28:46

I would not like it, in fact, I had that before. And that is why I quit all the full time jobs that I had. And I'm doing what I'm doing. And my wife actually is also an entrepreneur. And, you know, she was in a situation where she actually loved her job. She worked for a fortune 100 company and she she really loved the company she was working at. And then one day, we were getting on an airplane, we were going to Prague to go on a little vacation. And while we're on the airplane, she gets a call. And the call is we're getting rid of your leader, your leader is being demoted and you your leader is being replaced by this other person. And this other person was a terrible leader. And that was the beginning of the end for her is she me she literally she cried on the airplane. She was so upset because this other leader was looking after her they had a good relationship. And this new leader was just not he was like a robot didn't care, treated people poorly, and that was the beginning of the end of her tenure at the company. So she six years ago went off on her own now she's doing what I do, but customer experience.

Manfred 29:49

Now it's a sad, I mean, that's, but that's it's very true. You know, you want to have certain I developed a model of confusion, of course, but I wrote a book recently. I was Waiting for my, my publication of my last book, not the last book anymore the CEO whisperer. And I wrote a book called Covarrubias, which has to do with of course, the pandemic was an influence about meaning and death. And, and when you think about meaning, I see it as a kind of a center of a circle, where you one thing a sense of purpose, which is very important that your purpose is different from meaning is future oriented.

Manfred 30:25

You have, I think, the most important thing in any organization of any in life. And I used to, everybody had to read a book from this famous Harvard study, which started in 1938. You know, you know, the study of the sophomores, they followed for so many years. And the outcome was really belonging, it was important that you have good relationships with friends and family members. And also you live longer, because there's a stress test buffering effect. So belonging, then, my students, I mean, everybody has to make a number of important choices in life. Usually, it is part one. And we do badly there if no, we are using what 50% divorce rate. And the other one is, career, what would be my best career.

Manfred 31:11

So it's another thing the sense of, you can send sense of control and some sense of control over what you're doing, and you'd like your wife got quite upset that things were being done to her. And then you have also competence, what are you good at now this, I listen to some of your presentations before today. And you're a very good speaker, you know, very articulate, you have enormous vocabulary,

because for a foreigner, it's an alien, like me, is quite admirable, you know, to you have this talent. And so and so you can your home that, like I met my writing, I've written now probably 52 books or so. So I used to be terrible, I was constipated to use the term now. It just flows it goes, it goes fairly easy.

Manfred 31:53

And the fifth one of this particular circle of meaning is transcendence. Meaning now people work for money, but they die for a cause. And Milton Friedman, of course, was one of the disasters, and Michael Spence, I think, also at Harvard, about, you know, shareholder, shareholder money as fair value, which is, I think, has been a total disaster. And it's not good for the planet in general, to make it even make a controller. So those five things sense of purpose, sense of competence, sense of control, sense of belonging, sense of transcendence, make up meaning. And so, an organizational designer, you have to bring meaning to people, if you want to get the best out of them.

Manfred 32:36

I guess, I'm I-here's another anecdote, sorry, Jacob, I'm a psychoanalyst So I associate, I was I was flying to Denmark, in Copenhagen, and I needed to take a taxi to a place called booksmart. And so the taxi driver said, you're going to bugs that you go into this company, I love this company, my brother works there. My father works there, I would love to work there. So for 13 minutes, I got the secret about how great it would be to work with this company. So my final acid test of great companies is if you want your friends and family members to work there, that's a good indicator. There was, of course, a company which actually was in the pharmaceutical business and wasn't against penicillin, not tensing against diabetes, diabetes company. So So again, as a leader, you have to bring purpose to the organization apart from creating community and all those kinds of things, which I mentioned earlier. Anyhow I was babbling as usual, I'm babbling too much. And I'm off. And of course, because your face structured, you have my eight archetypes, which I have written 100 years ago, and so...

Jacob 33:51

To go a little bit off course. So one of the things that I was thinking about, as you were talking is, you know, you mentioned those Gallup statistics earlier, and everybody knows those Gallup numbers, everybody knows that we leave bad leaders, not bad companies. I mean, these are not new, new things. So if everybody knows this stuff, then why do we still have a hard time creating leaders that we all want to work with and creating organizations where we all want to show up? Because the numbers are there, the data is there. You know, I find it very hard to believe, for example, any leader that you go to, in any company, you could ask them, Why will somebody leave your leave your company, and he'll say, well, they'll leave the company because of a bad leader. Or you'll say, what are the engagement numbers that Gallup said, and everybody knows 85% of employees around the world are not engaged. These are not new things. So why why can we not create you know, these great organizations and great leaders? Why is this so hard?

Manfred 34:46

I guess they have to listen more to you.

Jacob 34:48

Yeah, I'm gonna take that quote and I'm making it into a sound byte we're just gonna put this everywhere that everybody just needs to listen to me. I like that very much.

Manfred 35:03

Character is sometimes destiny. And people have very good intentions. But do they do it to the act that way, and it comes back to the, you know, the element of the willingness to take a hard look at yourself. And that is, you know, and many people have their demons. I mean, I think you talked about the shadow sides, and Erickson was one of my teachers, Harvard talks about negative identity. But I don't want to look at it, and they put it in boxes, they don't realize is that when you keep the things, you know, you don't like about yourself, it's part of your inboxes, they might pop out without you being aware of it.

Manfred 35:45

And so how to know I mean, and you have to also think about your emotions, you know, what gets you mad, bad set or feel bad, you know, those kinds of things? What gets you angry? So when you get irritated? What, what is this other person doing to you? Do you realize what's happening. And so it really needs a little bit of a journey into the self, which takes and most executives, Jacob, as you will see, she has studied them for quite a long time, they are victims of manic defense, meaning they are busy all the time, they're busy, because in the moment, they are not busy, they might get depressed. Or they are you know, there's this element of manic behavior there. And that is new in. And actually, the better executive, what I try to do in my work is trying to create some reflective leaders, meaning that they act and reflect and also that they have some sense of what's happening on the surface, that life is not two dimensional. I sometimes give the example of you probably have you know, the, the parable of the Cave of Plato, have you ever done?

Jacob 36:49

Yeah.

Manfred 36:51

Yeah, no, I don't know if you have.

Jacob 36:57

Yeah, I have

Manfred 36:57

And so how to, for the for the for the listeners is basically a bunch of prisoners tied up in a cave, is if there's a fire behind them. So shadows are projected on the cave, there's only thing you need to see two dimensional, one of one of the prisoners, escapes, gets loose, goes outside and see the world sees a world of color. Now, coming back to the cave, he has to explain to the people that is a whole other world out there as that's very often my challenge that to explain to people the screen dimensionality of things that are so the world of fantasy dreams, all the things to pay attention to.

Manfred 37:35

And, and also the mean, you have a conversation with a person or a conversation recently with a person. And he told me about if it could be helpful in the family succession business. And you have to learn you have to listen carefully to what's not being said. It turns out to be in pursuit, what he explained as a very simple, simple problem was an extremely complex problem. I can say I didn't get it in the beginning. I mean, I knew there was something fishy, but I didn't get the whole thing.

Manfred 38:05

So, the question of listening you know, what is not being said listening with the cert as it sometimes was called having some kind of night vision to really what is going on there. And that is partially if you are a smart leader in the first place, you're already a walking symbol when you walk in your organization, but you have to be also very sensitive but people are people do also to be very aware of where you can add value. Because you know, what gives you energy. That's where you get the sub 40 minute come back to this eight archetypes. Some people are good in having a train on time. Some of the people, the types I mentioned, they're bored stiff.

Manfred 38:46

So you have to say okay, I can add value by being a good dealmaker. I remember once I was doing and I was going to do a workshop for it was also bank. And I looked at this, look at the different profiles, you know, after they filled out this quiz to see 60 questionnaires. And one person in the spiderweb had only one sin things sticking out. It was dealmaking. Everything else was Zilch. And I said, My God, I'm going to show that to the rest of the team. how they're going to react. I was I was I couldn't sleep very well, you know, saying how I'm going to positively reframe this. So I said I have to be on I cannot fetch I have to be honest about it.

Manfred 39:26

So I put it on the on the on the screen. And he looked at and starts to laugh. He said that's me. That's the only thing I'm good at. I'm good at deal making, but I guess I'm a total mess. And so and so he had a good sense as but he knew that as a result, he had people doing the other things for him to compensate for it. And that's important. You can do.

Jacob 39:47

Yeah. So you mentioned something that I thought was interesting and that is a lot of executives can be manic and if you know if they're not running around, always busy, they might get depressed. Have you seen from a lot of executives receiving leaders that you've worked with that they are, I don't know, maybe more emotionally fragile, they're more susceptible to being depressed to being anxious to being manic. Like, I don't know if any studies have been done on that, as far as kind of the emotional stability of leaders in companies, and if they're more capable of that stuff.

Manfred 40:20

Now, I can tell you, Jacob, everybody is normal, until you know them better. That's one of my slogans. I get us 21 executives in my class, I look at them. And then I start to, you know, marinate them and slowly, and depends on the culture of certain cultures, they say, how is everything's Everything is fine.

To fabyan, everything is fine. But slowly, you realize it's a total mess. And he started talking about the issues.

Manfred 40:49

So now, I mean, there are studies done about and the thing I'm seeing is recently quite popular is the psychopaths in organizations and I guess, probably, generally, 1% of the population have psychopathic tendencies. I've written about it psychopath, like psycho being psychopath light or more heavy. And then think about people are serial killers, of course. But in the financial sector, of course, because of the greed factor for ever higher number of psychopaths running around there, which, and that's I think one of the problems in many organizations is the greed factor. And I guess I was an article, I think, was Yes, in the Financial Times by Tom Peters about McKinsey, which used to be simpler, and I've worked. I mean, our school is also as in VI, the major provider of McKinsey. And so and, you know, in the scandal about the opioid crisis in America, and when, and that is sad, because there's so many good people there, but what went wrong?

Manfred 41:49

And, you know, again, it has to do with the greed factor, which very often come into play of course, you can say money is an indicator of how you have to compare yourself to others, but it's very often the greed factor, which comes you know, comes to fall. And

Jacob 42:09

I'm gonna...go ahead, go ahead. Finish what you wanted to say

Manfred 42:23

Now is what I want to say is I find it disturbing when American CEOs make 400 times something like the average salary, which is I mean, it doesn't mean they 400 times more valuable than other people in the organization, it's ridiculous and compensation. And then board. So if the supervisory board should sing better, and it's intense, which also has been coming to Europe and other countries was much lower. But you know, he said, you know, the my American colleagues make makes so much money, too. And it's, it's not healthy. It's not good for it doesn't set the example. I mean, well, the simplest thing about being a good leader, you know, that is setting the example. If you take your sample, you're so greedy. There's not a good example, sorry, this was my comments, and I've been my peeve.

Jacob 43:03

No, I couldn't agree more. And I don't even get me said that's like a whole, we could do a whole episode on that, which I think, you know, it's just completely crazy. But I want to get back to the archetypes because we have a still a couple left. Um, the next one was the innovator, which is where leadership is creative idea generation, and you say these people are focused on the new and they have great capacity to solve extremely difficult problems. And this, of course, seems a you need, you definitely need this kind of a person inside of an organization to solve these complex problems. Because a lot of people I find, actually tend to run away from the complex and hard problems. Not everybody wants to run to them and say, I'll do it, I'll do it, I want you to, I want to tackle that challenge. So any more context around the innovator that you want to share

Manfred 43:49

The innovators, the most delicate one, I think, is a delicate flower which have to water very carefully. Because it's like Gresham's law, bad money. good money. Bad money drives out good money. And, and they're, you know, this has to do with are the people who manage those people able to let go of control and let them flourish. And that's in many, you need a very special corporate culture for that, you know, to give them time, or not to commit mainly they talk about you and your wife. So you're not doing your own thing. But the moment people in persons above you trying to control you, you become allergic and you get the hell out of there.

Manfred 44:31

So that's it doesn't say many, it's interesting when you think about the pandemic, it's an interesting experiment, that many of control oriented people had to let go to some extent they have no choice. Now, will they fall back to normal, you know, we are changing is not that easy. That's not a story, but at least it was an interesting experiment about, you know, that work would be done from a distance. And of course, as you know, particular women, what they always want more than that and more than men, you Because men of course are cheerleaders, but they don't do as much is flexibility, flex time, the flex time element and this pandemic has shown that a lot of virtual work can be done.

Manfred 45:10

And I think about myself, I I wrote a little book in May, which are my only ebook, which called journeys in Coronavirus land. I can send it to you, I want to say quickly, because, you know, the time for publishing is take so long, and by the time I felt outdated, but basically I haven't, I haven't gotten but yes interest because you speak Russian I had an Baldino auto moment. Do you know what that is?

Jacob 45:38

no,

Manfred 45:40

you must have heard of Pushkin, of course,

Jacob 45:43

of course.

Manfred 45:44

And Pushkin wanted to get married. And he had a little state, I believe, called Baldino. So his friend said, Don't go there, don't go there. Of course, he you know, sometimes people will get married. So inside the go, he was probably 500 kilometres from Moscow, he want to go back. But lo and behold, there was an epidemic of cholera, and the Minister of Health in Russia didn't allow anybody to travel. And so it became his most productive period in his life, he finished a Virginia game, of course, he had one small advantage, because the child I didn't know that was his personal sensor, you know, really nice deprecate sensor for and he was far away from sire. So if he could no control, he could really flourish.

Manfred 46:23

So that was an insane, I mean, that's, now there's so so no travel, no other things. So that's at least that means a productive and very productive period. Now coming back to the innovator, innovators, most delicate person in an organization, and how to manage those people is not easy, you need a special talent to do that. But if you see their value, and that don't put them in, and sometimes it's actually better to have them put outside the company, or you have, you know, sometimes the famous skunkworks, you will have some creative people, but you have to have boundary spanners, people who protect them. Otherwise, the normal organization takes over and, and, you know, put a control and things like that, I think the reason I feel quite productive, is that I basically have told my Dean's that I'm allergic to authority, so leave me alone. And that's what they have done. They left me alone, as long as they produced as they otherwise would be. Off with my head, but that's another story.

Jacob 47:28

And so the next one, we have three left of the processor. And I think the stereotypical kind of image that this will probably conjure for a lot of people is an accountant or somebody in finance, somebody who believes that leadership is an exercise in efficiency. And they like everything to run smoothly, like a well oiled machine. They're effective at setting up structures and systems to support the organization's objectives. So this to me very much feels like a Thomas Friedman, about Thomas Friedman, Milton Friedman. You know, very like Frederick Winslow Taylor, process structure, finisher.

Manfred 48:05

That's Taylor, of course, I mean, you need those people in your patients, and they're important. But they should not. If you want to have a great organization, they should not should not determine dominate the culture I've seen that sometimes is, for example, the people in finance very often have to be some kind of policeman. And of course, you can say they should be sort of creative policemen, which was brings up associations of other things. But they should, they should have a certain amount of flexibility. I've seen men doing some good coaching, team coaching.

Manfred 48:40

I've seen how some of those VP finance are greatly admired for they do some I hate it. And that's not good. I mean, that because they all the time, stop, sings and stop sings and as opposed to try to anchor I mean, you have you have a culture dominated by those people, how can those those innovators survive, they can survive, they will leave? They are not they can leave a different kind of organization. And of course, you can say that. Now, being a leader of McKinsey is very different than running a steel mill. In in India, I mean, I've done both as students. So it takes again, coming back to the other factors involved in being an effective leader. So yeah, any of the, you know, different, different style.

Jacob 49:27

And then the last two, we have the coach, and I think we're hearing about this a lot today. Leadership is a form of people development, and these executives know how to get the best out of people creating high performance cultures. I think this is probably the most common week. I mean, we hear this about we hear about this all the time today. leaders have to be a coach, they need to be a mentor, they need to help other people. So he wrote about this almost a decade ago and it seems like it's now getting a lot more popularity and traction.

Manfred 49:57

I wrote many books about it about coaching if I used to run this on the largest coaching centers in the world. So I've trained, probably 100 1000s of coaches, now it's a very, important and very important quality, some people and some people aren't very good. And now some people is not there. But if you have, if you can combine some of those elements, which were mentioned, that you just mentioned, here you go places, you know, can really be very effective. But again, as I said, even though people project and I do an assessment, very often the CEO, because of people's fantasies, high on many dimensions. Not is that the reality, it may be partially because of idealizing factor. You know, people project their fantasies on them.

Manfred 50:51

So people have people, it can be confusing. That's what you have to realize. And I guess, I was mentioning this bank in which the CEO was brought in particular because his coaching skills because particularly because he had to build up a new team. And he knew what was needed to compensate for him. So he brought in quite some fairly senior people, parts of McKinsey and Boston Consulting Group to help him because that was not his stance, but he built up the team and that may meet during the banker round.

Jacob 51:25

And the very last one that we have here is the community communicator. Leadership is stage management. And these executives are great influencers, and they have considerable impact on their surroundings. And so anything, any more context to add on this one,

Manfred 51:43

No, I mean you how to bring your messages. I mean, I said already before, we have an executive officer said, every day, a new office, I can make 1000 people very unhappy. So you have to be quite aware of how you behave. You know, you have certain organizations where people come to the secretary or the assistant said, How does he feel today? Can I approach him, so you have to, unfortunately, as a communicator, what's very important is being and also the ability to be vulnerable, you know, to show that you are a human being.

Manfred 52:21

And I can, I can tell you how they're handling dogs, which I've taught probably too many times, I was working with another organization, and they had to take over said, Sorry, sorry, to take over. And so it was a lot of anxiety in the organization. So they brought in an outsider who was having a tough reputation. And to, to get a kind of icebreaker, I had a very, I first gave a talk to 500 people at conference centers. But after that, I added top 20 people in a room in a training center. And I asked them to do their to do their self portrait, which is a very good exercise to be able to think about himself. And so he had 20 self portraits hanging on the wall. So I picked a few because it could pick them all because it was take too much time.

Manfred 53:17

And of course, I picked also the one with the new CEO. And actually, it's a little video clip that you can find on the web, which was actually not real people, I had some actors act it out. But saw the person I asked him so describe what your what you what you what you have done, and not go down with your design there. And so there was a little girl and there was a boss going to a sunken port of glory, whatever it might be sunset, whatever it might be. So it was this little girl, they're doing this. And then he started to say, that's my daughter, and then started to cry, tears came out of his eyes, she died in a car accident. And that we think about it is the first meeting his executive team really has. And there's the top CEO having tears in his eyes. So everybody looked at at the deep end in order to calm it down a little bit, just a moment, just a moment that he had this, this this this moment.

Manfred 54:15

And he turned out to be an extremely good CEO. People felt you know, the mouse vulnerable, they feel safe, they could trust him. He could show his emotions. And he stayed in power and power. I mean, he stayed in the world for a long time and really turned the company around. I was very important, you know to talk about communicate, there was a communication even though it was unconscious. He I don't think he had control over that moment. But also you have conscious moments means simply I don't know sometimes I don't know. And asking people how you and being in communication is not just talking when you look at Buddha. When you look at the Buddha portraits is a little bit distorted because there's very big ears. You have one mouth and two big ears to listen To listen to what people have to say carefully listen. So I mean, some people have your talent Jacob, they can talk very well, there are many CEOs, you don't have the talent, they're not very good in it.

Manfred 55:11

But they can at least bring certain simple messages, of course, which are believable, you know, the element of authenticity, you can always, you can't always tell the truth as a leader, because you know, certain things, you cannot, you know, you have to keep a certain amount of distance, because in the end, you make decisions about people's lives, about their salary, their career, etc. But you can at least be close to the terms be close, you can also say, I cannot really, I can only promise you anything at this point in time, I don't know, is as intensity is important, and people very quickly. See through a person who is just pretending?

Jacob 55:48

Yeah, I love that story. Why don't we only have a couple of minutes left, so maybe just one or two more questions. So when we think through these eight archetypes, can a leader switch between them? Can you be one archetype one year or one month? And then based on a situation or circumstance switch to another one? Or can you be more than one archetype at the same time?

Manfred 56:11

Or you can be more than one archetype, but I don't think I mean, I think it was Napoleon who said character is destiny. It's not easy to change. What you can do is that you realize that at a certain stage, somebody else is needed to help you. Or you can resign. I mean, how long are you being advanced? I remember many years ago, I got 200 CEOs and said, How long do you think your issue productive life,

and they said something like seven plus or minus two years. So maybe, you know, we have now more and more portfolio careers, maybe it's time for you to do something different.

Manfred 56:46

We live longer to think about it that way. And but if you feel that this, by the way, different for family, family companies, because that they last much longer, but he can say listen at this point in the lifecycle of the company, I'm not the best person to do it. So you can say, Okay, I find somebody who can help me. Or I can say, maybe it's time for me to do something else in life.

Jacob 57:09

Yeah. Okay, so it sounds like you can, you can have more than one archetype, but you can't embrace a new archetype out of nowhere, because it's not kind of like your character, your personality. So what happens after you know what your archetype or archetypes are? So you identify them? Should you take on projects and only do things that play to those strengths? What happens if you get put in a position where you're not doing something that matches with that archetype? You know, somebody signs you to something? And it's, you know, maybe you're, you know, you're the entrepreneur, but you're being put into the role of the processor? How do you communicate that you're not a good fit?

Manfred 57:50

Jacob it's a very good question. And it's a problem because I sometimes make elect two by two matrices. So you have, for example, you have a healthy person, or other unhealthy person, healthy company, or unhealthy companies, you get four types. So if you put a person in a situation, which he doesn't, or she doesn't fit, it is not good for the person's mental health. So, and Lycos also sometimes may talk about your wife having having a boss or whatever, who was completely, you know, inappropriate for her, and would drive her crazy. So you have, you have to make certain choices. If you don't have, you can say, Okay, we have the psychological contract, to be very frank has been broken, there's no longer that you have life employments.

Manfred 58:37

So you have to say, Okay, I want what, when do what gives me energy that I actually developed some kind of energy barometer? And what was an article about it? So what gives me energy? And so just doing a simple diary for over a few weeks, and saying, Okay, what are the periods in the week where I got energy, and will not give you an idea what is important to you? And also is saying, and what? And what, what, what gives me negative energy meeting certain toxic people I can't handle? Of course, you can ask yourself, why are they toxic to me, which has to do with a psycho analyst, you can make some inferences about it, where it comes from. But that's another story as a whole other stock. So to go in that direction. I don't want to pester you with that. But it's a dosing that's, that's important.

Jacob 59:27

And maybe last question for you before we wrap up is, what mix should you have? So for any team, should you have one of each of these? Like, I mean, if you have a team of 20 people, should you have a mix of all of these archetypes? What happens if it's a team of four people and you don't have all these archetypes like how should you think about building a team or a company based on these eight archetypes?

Manfred 59:54

Now, again, it's a very good question that you have to think about your stage of development that was mentioned to you earlier, the investment Bank I work with. And they, the as a group of seven people, they they had everything actually together and you look at the combined their roles and look at as a kind of diagram, it's fit except one element which was developed, which was actually coach, they were not good in coaching, they were too busy with strategy, deal making and also having the things on time, all those kinds of things. So because of that, they decided we have to do something about it. And we have to hire someone who takes that role, because it will be going very fast. And we don't pay any attention to that kind of thing. And we're not very good at it either, given our personality.

Jacob 1:00:42

So I think identifying which one is missing, and then kind of making sure that all the archetypes are represented in some way is probably a good way to think about it

Manfred 1:00:52

in some way, because you never guessed that. It's a again, it's a snapshot. It's a certain element. And depends again, I set up the industry and things like that plays a role in what is the important that if you are on a if you are in the in the railroad business, you might have some different ways of looking at things.

Jacob 1:01:13

Well, Manfred time really, really flew by got a lot of wonderful comments from people who are tuning in live, maybe you can let people know. You have so many books and resources out there. So for people who want to learn more about you read some of these articles, check out some of your the things that you're working on, where can people go to connect with you or learn more about you?

Manfred 1:01:33

Nowadays in this happen, there's a website called kdvi, KDVI, which narcissistically Jacob stands for the Kets De Vries Institute. And they find lots of resources. Actually, it's, it's a it's an it's it's a consulting firm, which has lots of people I've trained eventually, but I'm not involved in it. And it's actually run by my daughter talking about family business. But kdvi got to go to the castaways Institute. And of course, I written too many books. That's my problem. Because I my last book, which came out recently, it's not a bad book is called be the CEO whisperer. That's another book I like is the leadership Mystique, which is not quite old. It was a simple book, but also very readable book. And then I wrote on the book, Sex, money happiness, an death in this, which is one of my popular books.

Jacob 1:02:26

Yeah, I wonder why that's popular books. Well, thank you so much for taking time out of your day. I had so much fun speaking with you. I learned a lot and you have a lot of wonderful stories and insights. So I really, really appreciate you taking time out of your day.

Manfred 1:02:43

It was a pleasure.

Jacob 1:02:45

Yeah, and thanks, everyone, for tuning in my guest again, Manfred Kets de Vries. You can Google his name and find lots of resources. wherever you're watching this. There, you're going to see the show notes. You'll be able to see his name, just copy and paste it. You'll find lots of great things from him. And I will see all of you next week. Thanks for tuning in.