(Un)authentic leadership in digital transformation?

Prof Per Servais, Linnaeus University
6th of May 2022

Public panel presentation and discussion

Keynote speaker:

Timo Schneider, Specialist, manager and external consultant in the field of digital commerce and online marketplaces with over 20 years experience; Kempter/Reuter, Germany.

Panelists:

David Lengström, CEO ALMI Business Partner Kalmar, Sweden.

Rene Lydiksen (PhD), CEO web-development Oxygen and global business leader at Lego Education International, Denmark.

Emelie Sjölander, Founder and CEO Boksmart Publishing and www.barnsmart.se, Sweden.

Marianna Strzelecka, Associate Professor, School of Business and Economics, Linnaeus University, Sweden.
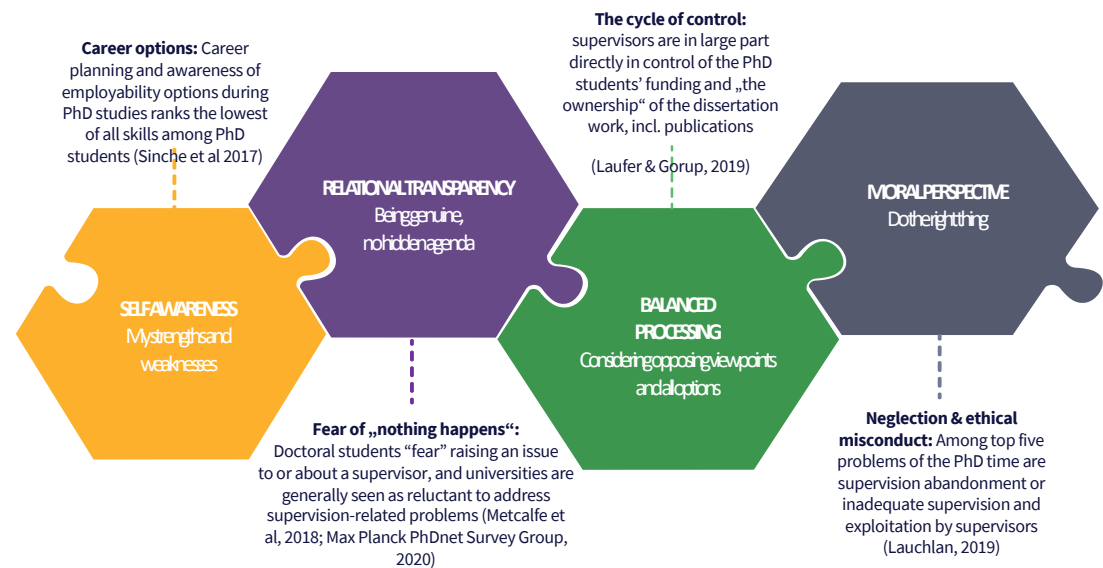
Romeo V Turcan, Professor, School of Business, Aalborg University, Denmark.

Authentic Leadership

What is authentic leadership?

Authentic leadership emphasizes *transparency, genuineness and honesty*. Authentic leaders build authentic relationships and inspire trust and motivation in their employees.

The four components of authentic leadership:

Career options: Career planning and awareness of employability options during PhD studies ranks the lowest of all skills among PhD students (Sinche et al 2017)

The cycle of control: supervisors are in large part directly in control of the PhD students' funding and „the ownership" of the dissertation work, incl. publications

(Laufer & Gorup, 2019)

SELF-AWARENESS
My strengths and weaknesses

RELATIONAL TRANSPARENCY
Being genuine, no hidden agenda

BALANCED PROCESSING
Considering opposing viewpoints and all options

MORAL PERSPECTIVE
Do the right thing

Fear of „nothing happens": Doctoral students "fear" raising an issue to or about a supervisor, and universities are generally seen as reluctant to address supervision-related problems (Metcalfe et al, 2018; Max Planck PhDnet Survey Group, 2020)

Neglection & ethical misconduct: Among top five problems of the PhD time are supervision abandonment or inadequate supervision and exploitation by supervisors (Lauchlan, 2019)

KEMPTER / REUTER

Knowledge. Experience. Perspective.

About me/us

Timo Schneider

- Management consultant for digital business models
- Lead Product Owner Order Management
- Head of eCommerce
- Head of Marketplace
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- Direct2Consumer Strategies
- Digital Commerce
- Digital Transformations
- Omnichannel concepts
- Customer-oriented Services & Solutions

(Un)authentic leadership of digital transformations?

Four perspectives on the digital transformation bubble

Timo Schneider (Kempter Reuter)

Linnéuniversitetet, 6th May 2022

4 perspectives

Anyone ever heard these?

1. „We do follow a **DETAILLED PLAN** in order to succeed in our company transformation"

4 perspectives

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- **This invisible Legacy is the result OF THAT TRANSFORMATION BEFORE THIS ONE**

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  - → Optimism + Complexity = **LETHARGY**

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- **NEW BUSINESS MODELS**
  → Bizarre processes + technology bent to the brink of breaking + unclear priorities: **A MESS**

perspective #2
„All Signals indicate the NECESSITY of this transformation to us"

1. **Example: The operational GROWTH IS SLOWED DOWN**
   → „Our USP became irrelevant – the customer wants what we cannot offer"
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3. **Example: The COMMUNICATION CULTURE GETS WORSE BY THE DAY**
   → „Our people don't embrace change yet – we need to communicate more"
   → **OR:** The organization tries to hint at short-comings that need to be adressed urgently

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- **IMPORTANT:** Only the "brainless" are not subject to the CONFIRMATION BIAS (= distorted perception). This also applies to top decision-makers ... and their advisors

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Making a FAIL-BUT-FAIL-FAST MINDSET part of the corporate culture
➔ **BUT** only if we regularly produce the right outcomes!

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MODULAR COMPETENCE

The competence to understand business models and organisations as a multitude of capabilities and to be able to put these capabilities together according to the company's purpose better than anyone else - at any time and repeatedly.

→ Modularisation as a CORPORATE VISION

CHECKLIST
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- **Am I already an AUTHENTIC LEADER?**
  …if not, how can I become one… and am I allowed to be one at all?

- **What have I done to understand the STARTING POSITION of my company?**
  … and do I actually understand my company today?

- **What have I done to avoid the CONFIRMATION BIAS?**
  … am I really right? Or does my company see things that I do not (yet) understand?

- **Do I understand the BEHAVIOUR OF MY ORGANISATION?**
  … and what can I do to build and maintain this understanding?

- **IS MY BEHAVIOUR REALLY AUTHENTIC?**
  … do I know what I am doing and for what purpose…? And how long can I keep it up?

All the best with your TRANSFORMATION

Timo Schneider

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Overarching questions to the panel

- Do you belive that you are an authentic leader?
    - How close is your leadership to your personal values?
    - Could you exemplify when you lead in an authentic way?

- Has digital transformation changed your leadership?

- Do you belive it is possible to be authentic, for example in the (potential) dilemma of sustainability vs digital transformation?