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How to get the best out of your organization and its ecosystem

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In concrete terms, how does a company manage the reorganization of its entire ecosystem by starting to reorganize itself?

NOEMIE MOREAU

To go back to what you were saying, Julien, if I look back at what we went through during the Covid-19 crisis, you spoke about a company with the ability to integrate itself into its ecosystem, and to grow its internal organization, in order to be able to adapt itself more quickly, it reminds me of something we went through during the Covid-19 crisis, which is a company's capacity to work with its competitors. For years, competitors were thought of as "the ones to beat", as if it were a war. During the crisis, we actually saw that, within different domains, **companies regrouping with competitors, enabling everyone to discuss best practices, exchange information, and help each other to emerge from the crisis, stronger**. And talking about the "ecosystem", it's something that came to light during

the crisis, that I found quite interesting, actually. **We were able to have discussions with our competitors on topics such as their crisis management strategies, how they adapted internally.**

Because when we talk about adapting to an ecosystem, in fact, we're talking about the company's adaptation it in its day-to-day life, as well as what's happening around the company, creating a new dynamic, ensuring that you get the best out of your company. In order to do so, we can do a few things. We can start from the working environment. I'll link into what you were saying just now, Guillaume. A few years ago, we started talking about sustainable development, as well as wellbeing at work. Certain companies, their first actions were to install a table football table and green plants [in the office] which actually don't solve the root of the problem.

No, **when we talk about the work environment today, we talk about working methods, processes, the context in which we're going to be able to do business, in which we'll also be able to highlight a company's value, and its purpose, in day-to-day life, and give to its employees** (and we'll come back to this later**), a real capacity to express themselves**. This was exacerbated during Covid-19, companies had to evolve very quickly, we had to take new paradoxes and paradigms into account, and we showed, during the crisis period, the world of work, we showed that we could do it! We were able to evolve very quickly, and it was really a question of will. At director level, at an operational level, we all needed to have a will to succeed.

From experience, how is it manageable?

In terms of pure crisis management, it's really interesting, because the methods we used to manage this crisis are methods we've kept for day-to-day, to keep that agility. In terms of crisis management, we started by setting up a crisis management cell, first a local one in China, because it all started in China for us. Then we quickly realized that the pandemic's expansion had to be managed on a more global level. So, we kept the local crisis cell, and we set up a group crisis cell, whilst also setting up local cells everywhere, and we realized that this was going to have a big impact. We couldn't continue to let our employees go into their offices. Many countries were going into lockdown. We asked ourselves lots of questions. For example, how were we going to manage training, when we used to do a lot of face-to-face training? Our employees were at home, how were we going to continue to train them and help them grow? Well, for example, these past months, we've seen many 100% digital training programs. **And digitalization is one of the ways in which working methods can evolve**.

We also saw, at Mantu, as well as at other companies, work processes which have evolved. For example, recruitment, or payroll. For recruitment, I'm sure that many of you have experienced recruitment processes where we go the company's offices to do face-to-face interviews, 1, 2, 3 times, and then another face-to-face meeting where we sign the contract in two copies, with each party retaining a copy, etc. There was a lot of back and forth. **Now, we have 100% digital processes, and they're much quicker in the end, because we don't have all these unnecessary trips**. And that's really valuable.

Payroll is similar. A few years ago, we'd see HR Directors with stacks of folders, we'd have cupboards full of personnel files, pay files etc. Today, we manage to have a 100% digital payroll. And that's also really valuable to have.

I'll take another example, in a sector far removed from consulting as an example, I'll give you an example of a small company that I particularly like, and which also resonates with my values, it's a small company called *Mademoiselle Vrac*. It's a zero-packaging food shop. They have everything in big containers. You go with your container and buy what you need. So, the company already had an

environmental vocation, an objective. But during the Covid-19 period, with lockdown, they found that people didn't have as much time to go out and shop. In general, they'd go to a place where they could find everything: a supermarket. So, during the crisis, the company decided to help their consumers consume as they did before, by delivering the items they order by bike. Furthermore, in line with their vocation to help local producers and companies who shared their values, they decided to provide a courier service for the local companies. So, they started to stock products which weren't their own products, but would become part of their offer, in order to help these local companies out.

So, that is another way to adapt your working methods, **continue to stay true to your values and purpose, whilst listening to the consumers and understanding a how they function. There are B2B clients, as well as B2C clients, and it's true that depending on the client, we'll react more or less pragmatically, more or less assured and dedicated, and that's important.**

The techniques we used to manage this crisis, such as evolving very quickly, moving to totally digital training, we're still applying these techniques now. It would be a real shame to stop now, when we've come so far with these techniques.

ARNAUD BUCAILLE
I'd like to talk about what you did with economic monitoring. To put this into context, Noémie asked us, well, we decided together, to say that each person in their own domain would organize monitoring, so you spoke about competitors, but also those people experts in your business domain. It could be social rights, typically we really needed that during Covid. In my case, I'm heavily involved with the business side of things, today I have links that I didn't have before with certain competitors of ours, with whom we answer calls for tender and we can get together and give joint bids, from a business point of view. So, it's true that it kind of permeated, and it hasn't not stopped in the aftermath of the crisis.

NOEMIE MOREAU
Exactly, and with crises, I'm used to, when I train people internally on crisis management, I usually say that during a crisis period, we see the best and the worst. So, the worst gives us an opportunity to learn, but the best fosters a lot of creativity. And our employees are very creative. Those around us are very creative, the other companies in our ecosystem are very creative. We shouldn't be scared to feed off of this creativity. Nor should we be scared of trying things out. The crisis itself forces us to come out of our comfort zones. That in itself isn't a problem, and processes outside our comfort zone aren't a problem either. You just need a framework behind it, but I will come back to that later.

I want to talk very briefly about Artificial Intelligence. Many of you will have heard a lot about it. It's in the middle of a boom. For a few years, we've been hearing more and more about it, and it's starting to permeate throughout companies. I always talk about AI with a bit of a nuance, because it's a technology. **And like all technologies, it should serve humans, not replace them**. **Why? Because humans have a huge added value; with a real emotional capacity, which is very useful; feeling**. And this feeling, it's often a good idea to pay attention to it. Furthermore, AI might allow us to carry out low added-value tasks, replacing humans for certain, very specific tasks. **However, humans should remain in control of the processes**. And humans have a huge added value in terms of creativity, thinking, evolution. So, it's interesting to keep an eye on, but important to put in context.

And when I say context, or framing, I think it's the second crucial element in an organization's effectiveness. Of course, it's true that I'm speaking as the Risk and Audit department manager, it's part of my work, to ensure that the organization is structured, and that's important. One framework which is becoming more and more important is security, information security. The world is becoming more and more digitalized, we're taking more and more risks with about information security

measures, which aren't necessary set up in a timely manner. A lot of companies wondered how they were going to manage sending all their employees' home, giving them access to the information and tools whilst keeping their information safe from prying eyes. How can we let everyone work, and ensure they employ the best practices? So, **we also did a lot of training, sensitizing people to these issues. And we secured our tools, for the IT people, we used VPNs etc. We can also talk about frameworks, ISO 27001 for example, MIST, and for those who don't know where to start, experts can help you get to know these standards and guidelines.**

To conclude, in terms of frameworks, there is a big issue today, reinforced with Covid issues, in terms of management models. Companies are evolving all the time, and quickly. Hierarchical relationships are changing. **Management needs to evolve and adapt to demands and needs. It's no longer a question of giving orders. Directors need to work with their employees and not just give orders. It's crucial to support employees. We can't just tell people to go home and work there. We need to support them, spend time "with" them, reassure them, give them vision. All this contributes to building solid bases, the bases a company needs, and this base is committed workers.**