A diagnostic approach to better management

03.11.2021 16:53:06 | Management Insights, Lukas Michel | 0 Comments | Diagnostic mentoring, Better management

It's time to finally get it right. Here is why this is important to you.

Agile, people-centric, and dynamic with the mentoring to get there fast

There is one insight that sums up our 20-year experience and expertise in helping leadership teams managing their businesses: The world needs better management.

We claim it to be diagnostic mentoring with agile, people-centric and dynamic capabilities at its core.

It’s a European approach with deep roots from the history of the Reformation and the experience of the Humanism – much of what shaped Peter Drucker’s view on management. At its core is the principle of self-responsibility. The Reformation posited that people are self-responsible, freed from the church to think and act on their own rather than to rely on the church to care for them.

Humanistic management is people-oriented where profits are the means for humans being the ends.

The diagnostic approach to better management is in sharp contrast to traditional management. Traditional management has been built on the Anglo-Saxon view of scientific management that people need control – being told what to do. People are seen as mere resources that serve the profit purpose. Much of the early 20th century management theory was based on that that one fundamental principle. The traditional management dominance is so strong that it survived up to today and transcended throughout the world. Just about every manager has been trained in command & control with business schools teaching what once

was successful. Efficiency, scale, standardisation, and reliability were the result. It is important to note that these are extremely valuable outcomes. They continue to be relevant. But they are not the only features that make firms competitive over a long period of time.

Times have fundamentally changed since the invention of scientific management nearly 100 years ago.

First, VUCA demands a high degree of flexibility from management and organisations. Three-year strategies, one-year budgets and annual performance targets are an impediment to fast changes. Second, the need for innovation: Today's competition is on innovation. Just being effective and efficient no more suffices to remain relevant. Third, the notion that people are just resources misses the fact that today's employees are well educated, come with distinct knowledge, and have the choice to work on what fits their purpose.

Despite the pressures of the new context, management at large has remained the same. Business schools continue to teach traditional management. And the consulting industry keeps pushing best practices, tips, and recipes that do not work. Better management claims that insights and experience are the best teachers when it comes to the new context. Diagnostics bring the insights, and mentors the experience.

Better management in the enabling mode outperforms traditional control-based management on performance, innovation and growth.

The analysis of over 300 client diagnostic results clearly shows organisations that invested in enabling management capabilities yield superior outcomes. That's no-nonsense.

Better management puts people first – ahead of clients and owners.

This is a courageous statement as most other relevant management approaches still insist that clients come first or they continue to favour the notion that the primary purpose of business is to serve its owners.

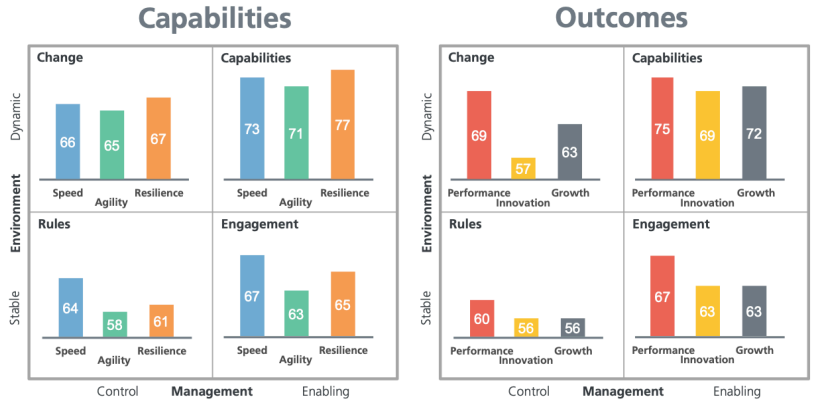
Better management starts with people.

The time has come for better management with people at its core. Diagnostic Mentoring poses that for people to perform,

managers first must remove organisational barriers that keep people from applying their full potential. Lukas Michel suggest that people follow the inner game techniques to maximise their potential and learning. And it is the manager's primary task to establish better management through raising awareness, acting on insights and fast learning. These three steps are the essence of transforming the way we manage through people-centric, agile and dynamic capabilities. Management advisors and executive coaches must create value by supporting managers make the choice for better management.

With our research on different management modes, we have identified four distinct approaches in response to systems related environment challenges and the needs of people for leadership: Control, engagement, change and enabling. In People-Centric Management, we have contrasted these modes on capabilities and outcomes. The scores of 300 companies on capabilities and outcomes in the enabling mode are significantly higher as compared to the control mode.

This means that an investment in better management capabilities most likely yields to superior outcomes.



We have also learned that building these dynamic capabilities follows the principles of diagnostic mentoring. Applying traditional ways to developing dynamic and people-centric capabilities (e.g. change, transformation, scaling up, ...) is doomed to fail. The failure comes from telling people what to do – mostly based on what managers have learned in the past. The better way is diagnostic mentoring as it promotes experiential learning.

Experiential learning applies the principles of the inner game (awareness, choice and trust).

These principles are simple but not easy to apply. First, learning takes place when attention is focused. High awareness is the

results. It is that combination that enables people to perform at their peak and reach their flow zone. Second, it is everyone's choice to learn or to continue in mediocrity. Choice is the prerequisite for self-responsibility. Third, trust is the result of experiencing flow more often. Trust in oneself and those that support us is essential for the access of our full potential and continued performance.

These principles are the same for those that perform and those that mentor executives to perform. Diagnostic mentoring is our approach to supporting leaders perform with diagnostics that enable high awareness and focus and the mentoring that builds the trust.

It's your choice to finally get it right: better management.

Diagnostic mentoring establishes better management

The diagnostic mentoring approach has one goal: Changing the world through better management. One management team at the time. Since 2002, 370 clients in 15 countries with nearly 2'950 executives have used our diagnostic mentoring services, and 40 outstanding partners have joined our community to represent us across the globe. We have written books, published our research, and cultivated our community. Currently, almost 900 registered executives benefit from our knowledge hub with access to our exclusive resources and insights.

Our mission is to help executives lead through humanistic management.

Since the beginning, our idea was inspired by Peter Drucker. We were and continue to be part of the annual Global Drucker Forum's agenda with its humanistic roots. Another cornerstone of our mission is Timothy Gallwey's inner game. We see awareness, choice and trust as the clues for expedited learning and the sources of peak performance. Agility (or in a broader sense of dynamic capabilities) combines well with the people-centric approach based on the inner game principles.

The mentoring applies these principles to our advisory approach. We see our job as offering observation points for leaders to focus their attention with the diagnostic tool combined with the

mentoring that establishes trusts among those that are responsible and the choice for them to make the critical decisions. We do what we say we do. The learning and performance mirrors our service delivery.

The diagnostic mentoring approach is well-documented in our books and grounded in many research publications.

The Books

Our books shed light on specific aspects of our model, the process, and applications to serve as guides and Masterclass reading.



The Performance Triangle (Michel, 2013) articulates the agile model in response to a dynamic environment, identifying the elements that make up an agile organisational. It now serves as the source for definitions, with examples and practices for managers.

Management Design (Michel, 2021, 3rd Ed.) offers the methodology and process for developing agile managerial capabilities. It illustrates the practice of Diagnostic Mentoring.

People-Centric Management (Michel, 2020) outlines the application of key people-oriented elements for effective leadership.

Agile by Choice (Michel, 2021) provides the workbook and helpful nudges to guide agile development.

And, our last book, *Diagnostic Mentoring* (Michel, Oct 2021) accompanies the Masterclass for experts with experiential learning and diagnostic mentoring for better management.

All books are grounded in twenty years of published research and tested with the practice of 2’950 executives in 370 organisations world-wide that have used our diagnostics. In combination, the books include 44 sample cases, 200 practices, diagnostic tools,

and many action items.

The books come with a digital version of the diagnostic and a series of lectures. Simply visit the website to...

ABOUT THE BOOKS

With *Diagnostic Mentoring*, our approach to better management is fully transparent, so to speak, open source. The value our certified diagnostic mentors bring is that they help you expedite your transformation projects with their insights, proven and scientifically tested diagnostic tools, and their experience in implementing better management across the world.

The Research

Our research focuses on performance, management and mentoring in a dynamic era. We collaborate with universities in the USA, Europe, and Asia to conduct studies with the data collected from our diagnostic tools. Increasingly, we publish sector case studies starting with the insurance industry. Our key publications are:



Michel, L., Anzengruber, J., Wolfe, M., & Hixson, N. (2018). *Under What Conditions do Rules-Based and Capability-Based Management Modes Dominate?* Special Issue Risks in Financial and Real Estate Markets Journal, 6(32).

Nold, H., Anzengruber, J., Michel, L., & Wolfle, M. (2018). *Organizational Agility: Testing Validity and Reliability of a Diagnostic Instrument.* Journal of Organizational Psychology, 18(3).

Nold, H., & Michel, L. (2016). *The Performance Triangle: A Model for Corporate Agility*. Leadership & Organisational Development Journal, 37(3).

Michel, L. (2013). *The Performance Triangle: A Diagnostic Tool to Help Leaders Translate Knowledge into Action. Organizational Cultures*: An International Journal, 12(2).

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The Mentoring

Diagnostic mentoring is our gentle advisory approach for executives in a dynamic context. The mentoring methodology mirrors the inner game approach to people-centric management. The diagnostic creates awareness. The mentoring leaves the choice with the client and builds on the trust that the clients already own most of the necessary skills and knowledge for better management. As such the mentoring focuses on the support for the leaders in charge.

We certify executive coaches, experienced advisors, and managers in diagnostic mentoring. They apply the model, the process, and the tools to work with clients around the world. Certification includes a 2-day workshop where participants learn from business cases and the on-boarding support by an experienced mentor.

ABOUT THE MENTORING

The Diagnostic

The Diagnostic is the most extensively practice proven and scientifically tested assessment tool to review dynamic managerial and organisational capabilities. The diagnostic is available for executives with 33 questions, for teams with 47 questions, and for organisations with 59 or 102 questions. 25 workbooks present the results, each with its specific filter, in 30 visual thinking aids on strategy, work, organisation, leadership, management and the toolbox.

The reports help leaders set the baseline, identify blind spots, create a typology, establish yardsticks, challenge assumptions, and guide the design and transformation. With the reports, leaders identify their organisation’s agile maturity, the management score, sources of competitive advantage, the business model fit, dynamic capabilities, the operating system, the work environment, management levers, the management model, the leadership scorecard and toolbox, organisational fitness levels and more.

ABOUT THE DIAGNOSTIC

The Community

The purpose of our community is to create a better world through applied research, diagnostic insights, and exchange among experts. We extend the invitation to our community membership so our clients, executive members, in-house professionals, the Mentors, alumni, and business partners can share our mission. Currently, 40 certified diagnostic mentors and 900 registered executives benefit from exclusive resources, publications, presentations, examples, documentation, and events.

THE KNOWLEDGE HUB

The Knowledge Hub

The HUB is our online platform with access to webinars, events, research, books, publications, tools, and our certification program.

REGISTER FOR FREE

It is time we finally get management right: Better management with the no-nonsense European approach. It has been tested, widely published, and continues to evolve past its initial 20 years.

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