

Performing Leadership - The Leader as Performer

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Introduction and background for the workshop with Peter Hanke at the Templeton Executive Education, November 15th 2004.

Based on the contemporary leader's urge to understand complexity, the nature of creativity and new methods of leading modern human beings in rapidly developing organisational surroundings, the new perspectives of integrating Arts in the management development can create both a background for personal growth and profound understanding of the notion of *Leadership*.

Management → Leadership

Consider the origin of the term "Manage": You will find firstly [**manége**] (French, from the circus) – the metaphor of the manager as the ruler of the horses, whipping the animals around in circles, and further deeper into the etymological meaning you will find [**manus**] (*hand* – Latin). Management is then related to the activity of organisational control, visible with clarity, well structured, and guiding with your hand.

- Great stuff in the industrial and post-industrial world, but not sufficient for leaders of today.

Of course every organisation needs to control things and create clarity, but these tasks are not the leader's main issue to this extend anymore. Typical management issues can be outsourced either through technology or in the organisation. And you have to consider other meanings of the deed as a leader, which hundreds of books, seminars and courses around the world show pretty clearly.

In this context the origin of the term "Lead" becomes extremely useful. The Old-Nordic [**leiða**] has a double-meaning: "go in front" *and* "search". Combined, these two meanings are relevant as an agenda for the leader, who courageously wants to shape him- or herself in a new image – quite demanding for a human being to dare skip the control and gain ability to cope with complexity, diversity, possibilities, ambiguity.

A fruitful journey towards mastering this interpretation of the term "Leader" would be to "go philosophical" and learn to master the ancient Greek state of mind; to balance the True (Logos), the Good (Ethos) and the Beauty (Pathos) in whatever you do as a leader. Accepting this, you need to create self-reflecting environments, and – in the context of your deed as a leader – learn more about yourself.

We have experienced at the Centre for Art & Leadership that the combination of Philosophy and Art can create quite powerful tools for this sort of personal development as well as complete organisational understanding of the potential in common. Philosophy creating a language, terms and notions of the needed transition, and the Arts implementing the same ideas in our senses, bodily experience and memory.


The Conductor as a Leader

Participating in a conducting workshop at Templeton, you are exploring the full meaning of the transition from Manager to Leader. Throughout the workshop we will hit different issues and embody the same sort of knowledge, we need to possess to be able to convert the activity of only controlling the organisation and – literally – free the members of the organisation to *ask* for leadership.


Both the theoretical background and the phenomenon “a conductor” in the musical performing environment gives a huge range of metaphors and similarities with other sorts of leadership:

The Conductor as a Leader

- **Medium**
 - The stream of meaning through the organisation
- **Power and Force**
 - Sharing the ownership of knowledge with the members of the organisation
- **Ideal Leader**
 - Silently serving the organisation’s tasks
- **Mentor**
 - The lead of experience



Voces Copenhagen

Exart Performances www.exart.dk Centre for Art & Leadership Peter Hanke 2004  Copenhagen Business School

Conducting Course

Matches the form of a classical masterclass for conductors, and enables the leader's personal performance and communicative skills with gestures and body language. The conductor as the ideal leader is explored and combined with a survey on the performing arts and the impact in the organisation. A conductor is a visible leader, who is listening to the employees.

Another advantage for the participating group is calibrating the listening and sensing ability, the musical techniques offer. To end the session the ensemble and Peter Hanke show the emotional logistics of the music making - how an expression is built.

Form:

- The workshop works with 6-25 participants together with a group of 6-16 professional singers in a period of 2-6 hours.
- In Denmark singers from Voces Copenhagen will form the rehearsing ensemble; in other countries a local based ensemble will be appointed. In Oxford the group **Musica Beata**.
- Parallel to the conducting exercises the participants are coached individually to maximise the impact, personal presence and performance ability.
- Video recordings can be used.

Result:

- Through the personal experience conducting and exploring the role as the musical leader of a professional ensemble, the leader's ability of non-verbal communication and presence credibility as well as bodily timing is focused.
- The direct form of the music and immediate response tells without any hesitation, how the leader is handling the situation.

The concept and workshop is Peter Hanke's most successful and has been performed at leader courses and conferences in more than 20 companies in Denmark, Holland, England, Sweden, Slovenia and Norway since 2002 - among these are:

Mac GREGOR Group, Nycomed, Dansk Management Forum, Center for Ledelse, PostDanmark, AMB Amro Bank - Amsterdam, Templeton College - Oxford, IBM Danmark, Vejle County and Copenhagen Business School.