

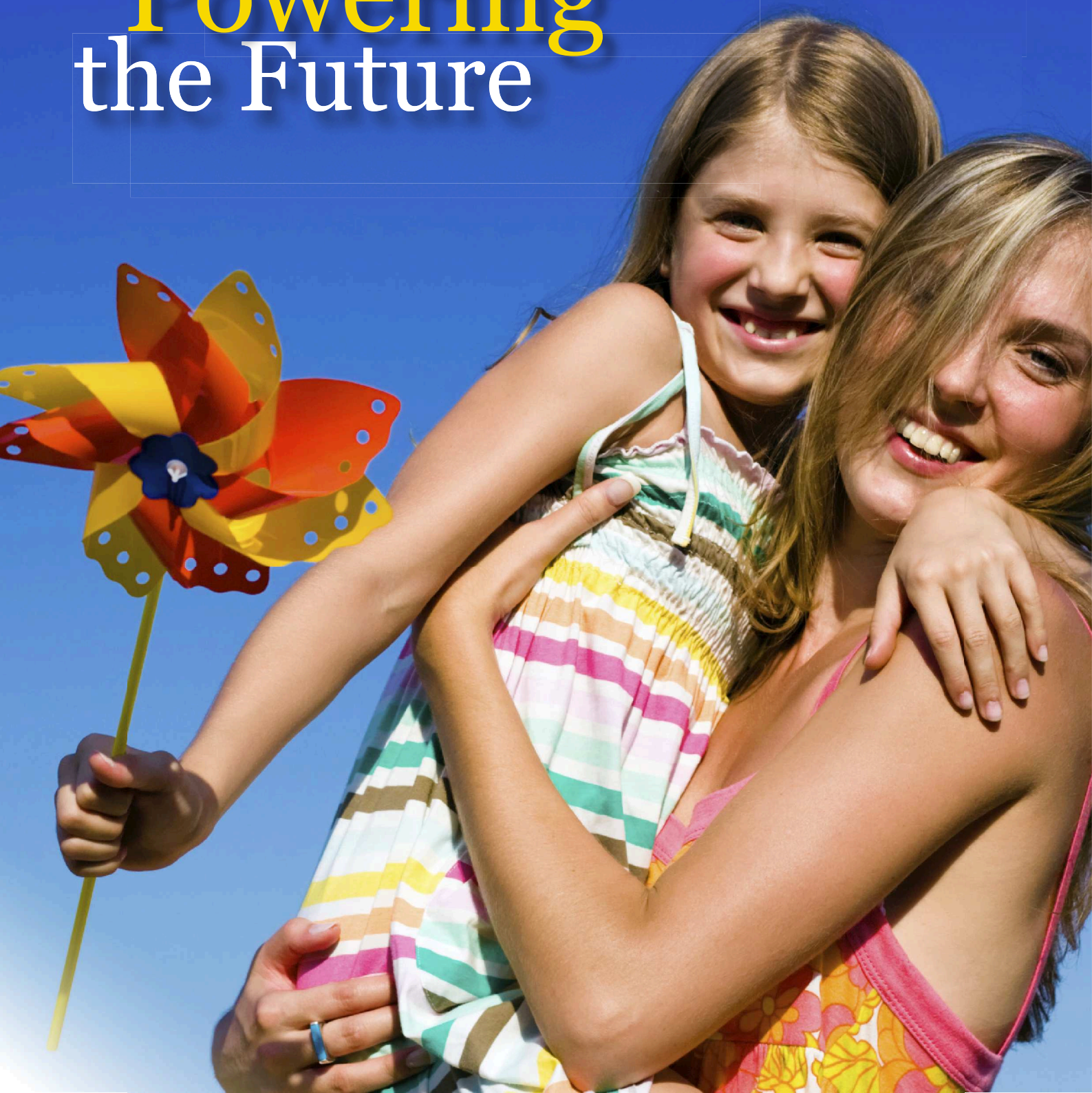
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Germanway — Powering the Future





Executive or Teenager?

by Daniela Claudia Szasz

Something that has just really struck me again is the fact that there are certainly many nice jobs in the world and also again some where you can earn a great deal of money, but none of these jobs is anywhere near as challenging, sometimes as hard and simultaneously as fulfilling as one where you deal with people.

Such a contradiction, isn't it?

Sometimes it's difficult enough to get on with 2 or 3 people in your immediate vicinity and to reach a consensus. So how is it when you constantly have to deal with large numbers of people in your job?

Is it something that's impossible ...?

All of us here are active in a very "unusual" industry, network marketing. That also means for each and every one of us, depending on the size of our teams and the number of people we work with, a greater or smaller challenge. The smaller the team, the fewer the challenges, the larger ... Have fun!

The fun really starts above all when you have up-and-coming executives (execs) who already know all there is to know or experienced ones who don't want to have anything to do with the up-and-coming ones, or vice versa. The more execs you have – who all have their own opinion – the harder it is to keep your balance and maintain harmony between the individuals and also sustain the necessary cooperation. For fundamentally everybody has a bone to pick about something with somebody at some stage or other ... and of course everybody's in the right. And if they don't have a bone to pick with somebody in your team, then they'll have a bone to pick with you at some stage.

If they're successful, they're responsible – if things don't work out quickly, it's your fault! And the game gets better when the secretiveness starts or when one person goes over the head of another. The lovely game with intrigues... Where you would really love to get between them with a whip in order to shake some sense into them. – But, of course, you stay calm and instead you try to understand... As long as the team's small you have the advantage that it's relatively easy to keep it together, but at some stage the day will come (if your business grows), when they want to leave. This is a situation many execs, who've just built up the business, find themselves in; they've partially achieved their goal and were quite happy with the situation – and then the next moment things go haywire in the team: Because some things aren't going quickly enough and all of a sudden they're sure that without you things would be much quicker. You are blocking them! All of a sudden their ego and their arrogance develop just as quickly and they can do everything much better on their own... In the last 13 years I've experienced this phenomenon many times, both in my own team and in those of colleagues with similar success. And on some occasions I've been asked by colleagues how they should react here.

The central question in such a situation is: What to do?

When you recognize that what's happening isn't good for

overall development and you're convinced that a split would be premature – try discussion! That may be sufficient to get back together. The most essential thing from my experience is not to have any expectations of your team. I know that sounds hard and difficult. Particularly when you've been aiming to reach the next level and you now see your hopes being dashed. But we're all sometimes very keen on expecting our team partners to do all sorts of things. I can only recommend that you scale down your expectations. That'll make communication a whole lot easier. But if all your efforts don't change their decision in any way and even so the desire to leave remains: Then let them go their own way!

Do the thing you find hardest – let go!

If you don't let them go, if you get awkward, if you act in a dictatorial manner, it'll sooner or later definitely lead to unnecessary conflicts within your team and perhaps even assume unnecessary proportions. That's just like the situation where parents know definitely that what their adolescent children are doing isn't in their best interests because they have more experience – and nevertheless they have to let them bang their heads against a brick wall. Because the children want to prove to their parents at all costs how great, big and strong they are on their own.

They're convinced they know everything, even worse they know better than you and the slightest objection on your part would only spur them on... which isn't to say that you as the exec are always in the right!

Therefore... do yourself a favor and let them do it! It might take months (but expect it to take years) until perhaps they understand. And do you know why they might understand someday? Because they'll then probably experience it themselves, only the other way round... in their own teams, and totally unexpected. And while all this is happening, very interesting insights will definitely be waiting for you, if you let it happen.

Do you know such situations? In the case of others perhaps? Or have you already experienced them yourself?

If you now proudly announce to all the world that everything is rosy in your team and your people stand behind you 100 per cent, come what may – then you can take it from me: Either your team is still quite small and you don't yet have any team partners who want to push themselves in front of you, or you're shutting your eyes and telling yourself nice fairy tales about how much everybody loves you... (we all love to hear these fairy tales now and again, me included ;-) But also for

you the day will come – if you remain long enough in the business. I've never experienced a teenager who hasn't rebelled and knew everything, but everything better – and because that's the way things go, it'll also happen to you at some stage. Though some start somewhat prematurely before they've finished growing up – it's, nevertheless, no use saying to them: "Hey, you're still only a teenager! Wait, learn and observe until you're 18 or 21 and then move out!" No, they think they can do everything already at the age of 14. It's no different with us in the network.

It's very important that execs above a certain level make themselves independent and go their own way in order to be able to become better and stronger. But this should only happen, if possible, when they're really in a position to cope with all difficulties on their own. When they've worked on themselves and regularly improved their skills. And done so not only regarding turnover and recruitment, but also as human beings. The most difficult job is not the turnover, in our industry the most difficult job is creating a relationship with the different people and being a role model for them in an all-round sense.

Sometimes I say jokingly: "Just creating turnover can be done by any halfwit who's been properly drilled. But teaching somebody what it really takes to be an independent executive, how to treat your team partners and to develop a sense of ethics... that's something comparable to the high art of mathematics!"

Therefore to my mind network marketing really is the very best and most brilliant school for learning how to deal with people. You can learn in equal measure how to do something and what's best left alone. But when one of your execs has reached the stage where they can work on their own and have reached an appropriate status on a stable basis it's at least just as important for you as their upline to respect this and, at the latest from this point on, not to pass them over anymore when dealing with their downline, but to let them and their team to get on with their business.

Otherwise you undermine their authority and weaken them in front of their team instead to strengthening them. And in doing so you in turn breed dissatisfaction, because it could provoke resistance – and that would destroy the business, not promote it. That has something to do with humility and with respect for the great things your execs have achieved. In this way you let them know that you trust them to make more of themselves – and if they need you, you're still there for them. Here we're dealing with people and not robots (even if in

some cases you may sometimes have doubts :-)) It's extremely important when dealing with people to develop a certain tact and to continue to develop it. And here I'm not talking about diplomacy, but about authenticity and genuineness.

I am not particularly fond of diplomats. You never quite know where you are with them. When they speak with you, they are on your side but when they speak with somebody else, they are on their side. They lack a certain "standing". Simply to stand up for something, cost what it may. They tend to be so wishy-washy, neither fish nor fowl... or they are calculating and always take what they need at the particular moment.

If I like something or not, I will stand by my opinion!

There are execs in top positions who like to pass over their downlines, even if these have reached a high exec level, in order to look better themselves. This isn't exactly helpful for growth.

I once had an upline, who was an expert at doing it right. He always strengthened me in front of my team and even if somebody wanted to have a discussion with him he always informed me both before and after. He never allowed anything to get in the way of that. I still remember that fondly today and say: That was style!

The most important thing in my experience is that even in crises, if they should happen, communication is very important. Keeping quiet about things or keeping them secret is never a solution in the long term. The great thing is that if your upline should want to take over work for you, despite the position and competence you've already reached: you can take a vacation without a bad conscience and really and truly relax.

What level of development have you reached with your team?

Anyway it's important to recognize that we all make mistakes sometimes since we're all human and in this business we're constantly day after day confronted with a huge number of other people. All different characters, individuals, personalities, opinions... To recognize this and also to apologize on occasion when things have gone wrong requires courage. But this is one of the things that make a good exec, isn't it? They have the greatness to apologize occasionally.

In this sense I wish you today for whatever reason... lots of courage!

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