

# **"Balancing Reason and Emotion"**

**The recipe for true corporate success**

**You snooze, you lose!**

**Using reason and emotions as successful management tools**



## Reason and Emotion as valuable management instruments

Copyright: © 2006, Cees Buys

Address author: Johannes Geradtsweg 185, 1222 PS Hilversum, the Netherlands, (EU)

Telephon3: 00 31 (0) 6 – 51 34 26 49

E-mail: cabuijs@gmail.com

English translation: Charlotte M. Buijs MA

Coverpicture: Painting from mrs. Sita Boonstra: “The Source”. This painting was made out of different painting techniques and is at present owned by Cees Buys

Photography: Marloes T.H. Buijs

ISBN: 9789462542457

NUR: 801

Internet: [www.slapendoejesnachts.nl](http://www.slapendoejesnachts.nl)

### All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be copied, stored in a data file or made public, in any way or form, be it electronic, mechanical, by means of photocopies, recording or by any other method, without written permission in advance from the author.

As far as making copies from this publication is authorised under article 16B 1912 Copyright Act j ° the decision of 20 June 1974, St. b. 351, as amended by the decision of 23 August 1985, St. b. 471 1912 Copyright Act and article 17, it is necessary that legally owed fees to meet the right Repro Foundation (p.o. box 3060, 2130 KB Hoofddorp). For taking part in this publication in anthologies, readers and other compilation works (Copyright law article 16)

# **Foreword**

**Prof. Dr. Geert J.E.M. Sanders (Groningen University)**

# **Introduction**

**Prof. Dr. Harry B.M. van de Wiel (University Medical Center Groningen)**

## **Chapter 1: the context in which you work**

*How to deal with changes within an organisation?*

- The ‘culture scan’
- The process of change
- The organic composition of an organisation
- Problem analysis
- A pragmatic approach
- The strategy
- For whom are you actually working?
- The management agreement
- Coaching top management

## **Chapter 2: Emotion Management**

*Balancing emotions and rationality guarantees (professional) success*

- Sensitivity versus rationality
- The organisation
- The emotional band width
- Seeing and hearing emotions
- Professional maturity
- Negative emotions

## **Chapter 3: Authenticity**

*Enabling people*

- Human strength
- Authenticity
- The power of positive thinking
- Strength in everybody
- Enabling people
- Ambition, passion and guts

## **Chapter 4: Confidence**

*Sincere faith in yourself as well as in others equates doing good business*

- What is confidence? □ Letting go
- The difference between success and failure
- Counting results

## **Chapter 5: Co-workers**

*Investing in your most important assets*

- The value of a co-worker
- The role of the director
- Choice and chance
- Dismissal
- Bad co-workers
- Anchoring processes

## **Chapter 6: Facilitating leadership**

*Excel in supporting your co-workers: it will pay off eventually*

- Basic values of the manager
- Management styles
- Confronting someone with their conduct and attitude
- Excellent leadership
- Bottom-up and top-down
- Break through your own frame of mind

## **Chapter 7: Personal marketing plan**

## **Chapter 8: Spiritual part of having success**

## **Schematic representation of the work method**

## **Epilogue**

## **Acknowledgements**

# Foreword

In 1985, when I decided to work for the Faculty of Business Administration at Groningen University, I met a colleague with whom I felt a profound connection from the first moment onwards. There was a spark between us, and in the twelve years that followed we went through a lot together, both at home and abroad.

This colleague worked as a senior advisor for a well-established consultancy agency during the first half of the week, and the rest of the week he spent on working for the faculty. His expertise and passion concerned ‘project start-up’. His personal and his professional life were basically dedicated to the following question: ‘how can one (particularly in the initial phase) form a project, that will be shaped in such a way that conditions are created which warrant successful continuance on the long term?’

He lived for his profession. Students enjoyed his teachings, in which he shared his daily experiences in the business community and in which he exposed them to his ‘project set-up’-methods. He invested his focus and energy in the primary process of the faculty: teaching and research. He found meetings with the department a waste of time, as he believed it overly prioritised internally rather than externally-focussed processes. According to him this was not stimulating the survival of the faculty in its international environment.

He taught me to choose for the development of my emotional and rational talents, and to put these talents to use as sensibly as possible in the benefit of the organisations that I am associated with. I learned it is important to see yourself as a source of action in which you allow yourself to become inspired and fed by stimulating role models in your environment; to have a keen and inquisitive attitude (resulting in growth), to consciously distance yourself from your comfort-zone, where you are no longer open to the exciting aspects of the mundane, and finally to become a role model to your co-workers as an executive figure.

You might wonder: ‘how could I become better acquainted with such important themes of life and work?’ I will give you my advice plainly: [read this book](#).

By using a manifold of recognisable business situations, the author will show you how to deal with challenges that you are confronted with on a daily basis: is confidence or fear your mainspring? In the first instance you will see the world in a wholly different light than in the second! This book mainly concerns ‘enabling people,’ namely: helping people to become inspired and motivated professionals. After many years of experience as change manager and crisis manager the author shows how people could find and take their responsibilities, accompanied by testimonials from people whom he coached.

Reading this work allows the reader to become grasped and intrigued. The initial processes of growth in people, the ways in which they flourish as well as maintain their developments are immensely tangible. Yet one cannot escape from actual transitions in life, such as advancing age or the loss of loved ones. How does one deal with such situations? Do we have the courage to confront ourselves, in order to reassess our experiences, perceptions and convictions?

I experienced this book as refreshing, a work from which I could derive a great deal of energy. Who knows what influence it will have on you?

## **Prof. dr. Geert Sanders**

Professor of Organisation Science on the Faculty of Business Administration at the University of Groningen, director of the Ubbo Emmius Fund for relation-development and fund-raising.

# Introduction

No trip around the world without taking the first step; no reflection without emotion!

It's a perpetual fluctuation. After centuries of surviving everything and everyone (including the Romans), which was largely possible due to our sensibility, we ultimately had to do without. Emotions were deemed inappropriate and unseemly. Spiritual leaders understandably formed the basis of this banishment; emotions were after all closely associated with the abdomen, the pit of disgrace. This marked the immediate commencement of the gloomy Middle Ages. Man's revival was not a fact before courtly love made its appearance into society, and inner life reclaimed some room to breathe.

Head, heart and hands formed a well-oiled trinity, resulting in unheard-of productivity in the arts and sciences, but also in terms of trade and industry. The *homo universalis* acted, thought and felt everything in newfound freedom. However, times change and again we see the tide of emotional ebb and flood repeat itself. Not only the arts but also productivity and mutual relations flourish as never before when there is room for emotions, for the human scale as well as for common sense. The importance of this balance is applicable to any age or culture.

The first step to acquire common sense and to respect the human scale is reflection, and emotions are the most fundamental form of reflection. No trip around the world without taking the first step; no reflection without emotion! Yet emotions entail much more than that. They control the way we digest information and therefore determine and coerce, as if it were traffic signs, our directions and mobility in human relations. Emotions, however, also have their reverse: they can be dark and dangerous. They can obscure our voice of reason, or even remove our grip on reality.

In short, modern professionals are better off acknowledging the importance of emotions. This book will be a guide on how this can be done. Cees Buys shows how you and your organisation can flourish again by relying on emotional values such as confidence, authenticity and sincerity. On the basis of many practical examples from his long and especially rich career Buys discusses the function of emotions as engine, steering wheel and brakes. Buys illustrates one of the most fundamental laws of psychology: a person is as intelligent as their emotions allow them.

**Prof. Dr. Harry B.M. van de Wiel**

Head of the department of psycho-social knowledge of the University Medical Centre in Groningen

# Chapter 1: the context in which you work

## *How to deal with changes within an organisation?*

### **The ‘culture scan’**

There are two things I need to know as soon as I enter a new organisation: how much financial freedom do I have, and what cultural values are upheld? There is very little room to rebuild if the organisation is practically bankrupt. It is therefore absolutely essential to know how many resources are still available before you decide to work for an organisation. The other all-important matter concerns the so-called ‘cultural values’, which are often forgotten or neglected. The cultural values can be interpreted as an accumulation of broadly shared emotional values within an organisation.

Virtually every organisation which does not function well emotionally has problems and internal communication and effectiveness is at stake. This is a complaint that is often voiced by managers, and it indicates that there are many organisations which do not fare terribly well. It is important to pinpoint what these broadly shared emotional values actually are before the actual sore points shall be addressed. I have executed many so-called ‘culture scans’ and the major themes which generally prevail are the following:

- An advanced sense loyalty and commitment
- An urgent need for security
- Pride
- Readiness to help
- Conscientiousness

Around 90% of all employees find such a culture-scan recognisable. What does this really signify, though?

With a culture-scan you will have the ‘DNA-profile’ of the organisation you are dealing with. To put it simply: an organisation is a collection of human beings, and a human being is a collection of emotions. Once you recognise the communal connotations in this, you can lead both on an emotional and a rational level. Because emotions settle scores very stringently, you could use it as a very useful managerial instrument: not only in processes of (fundamental) change, but also most certainly in the daily guidance of (a department of) a company. When you keep in mind the aforementioned cultural profile, you can conclude that open communication is absolutely essential. Trust and respect has to be granted to them, they have to be stimulated in their ‘fighting spirit’, passion and courage. Finally they have to be given plenty of space and conditions in particular, to facilitate them in completing their assignments as optimally as possible.

Letting go is the motto here. As an executive who needs to set an example to others you are put in a glass house. It becomes your task to be a source of inspiration, to determine the course of a company: share your vision, give advice, be a sparring-partner, and live up to engagements that were made. You need to be trustworthy, morally sound and motivating. These traits are necessary to become a respected leader. Awareness, passion, and courage will

be created by broadly sharing the universally recognised cultural values with the management as well as employees: first and foremost on a small scale, but this will spread unchecked. It is fundamental that confidence between the management and shop-floor workers exists.

Also from a rational perspective it's important to list whether you have access to the necessary instruments. Are the processes implemented soundly into the systems and structures? Is the administrative and financial control organisation in good working order and does it deliver reliable and timely information? Is there a well-defined separation between someone's function and tasks which need to be performed? Are warranties and accountability universally understood, and does everybody act in agreement with the procedures? Is the necessary bureaucracy well-organised? There is as a rule at least a rational infrastructure in every organisation. This rational side must be frequently actualised and optimised in order to efficiently realise the intended results.

The emotional development of a company is usually neglected, leaving many companies 'emotionally bankrupt', often (partly) as a result of wrongly executed reconstitutions. Confidence has to be regained. In case you make a healthy balance between the rational and emotional side of doing business, success is absolutely inevitable. Success can have many origins, and it's the basis for further growth. Such developments lead to excellence, absence will drop far below average, and all the promised objectives are more likely to be reached, also often sooner than expected. This applies to virtually every organisation I worked for, also for the larger companies (five-hundred or more employees) where great emotional damage and turmoil prevails, for example due to frequent organizational restructures. Great results were made on the basis of the methods that are described in this book, and these results continuously exceeded the promised goals.

Yet what exactly is this 'culture scan' and how can such a scan be organised? This is a matter of asking very specific questions to people within an organisation. Because of your commitment and involvement in the organisation, you will usually know how these people feel about their professional environment. Start off by asking the Management team about what the emotional values of the employees are. In other words: what is the greatest common denominator?

Their first answer generally does not reveal the core emotion of an organisation. In my experience, employees who work in the Northern provinces of the Netherlands employees generally tend to have more affinity with authority, as I was often introduced as 'the boss' in these parts. Contrastingly, employees would think twice before using the 'b-word' in the urban agglomeration of Western Holland. It seems as if there is a higher need for security in the north, partly because this region has been lagging behind economically for a very long time. The tendency to embrace authority is therefore not a shared emotional value, but could be attributed by a commonly shared need for security ("I hope I will not lose my job!"). 'Old-school bosses' from companies such as Philips, KLM, Shell, PTT (former Dutch Post), DAF, Fokker would warrant lifetime employment: they were bosses who looked after you.

Employees could have a stronger fighting spirit, and they could be even more independent than their employers, although this wholly depends on the economic and professional development of a company. Personal mobility is directly related to this. Their sense of viewing their employers as their 'boss' is stronger if employees feel economically dependent

on them. The foundation of this feeling is fear and this is not at all a recipe for success and strength. Nor is it the emotional drive to turn the process of economic stagnancy around.

In order to make an accurate 'culture scan', you can also call for the aid of a specialised consultancy. There is a variety of digital programmes that could be used for this purpose. Yet I would rather not use such means if I had the choice: 'culture scans' are about emotions. Addressing the people of an organisation and asking them about the cultural values is the best method to carry out such a 'culture scan'. The 'DNA-profile' of an organisation can be formed as soon as the emotional core values are determined. Subsequently it is essential that your own behaviour is tuned to how you should communicate, timing, openness, style, letting go, and so forth. Every emotional (and cultural) value requires a certain way of behaviour that you could adopt. A need for security therefore requires open communication. You are better off sharing too much than too little.

Too little will be interpreted as unreliable (to put it concretely: you could be accused of having a hidden agenda). Openness and respect could form the emotional counterbalance. Pride as emotional value requires respect. Conscientiousness requires letting go, in order to give confidence and space to breathe and work. Adopt this attitude and you will discover and mostly 'sense' which kind of behaviour is required. However, if you are still unsure about how to go about this, use your intelligence based on your authentic self: what kind of attitude and behaviour this should be, and what kind of professional emotions will help me to find the right approach? If this also proves to be a tall order, then simply adapt to the kind of behaviour which you intuitively find most appropriate. The response and the effect of your chosen behaviour will clarify a great deal. At last you will see what the response is to the various emotions, and as you go along you will become more aware of your emotional strength. Mind you, your authenticity should always remain at the foundation and bear in mind that the opposite of trust is fear. An emotionally-trained coach is capable of accelerating this awareness.

## **The process of change**

The most optimal state of an organisation (which I would like to define as a collection of people) is one that is equipped for permanent change. Markets are always in motion and the economic fluctuation is perpetual. It is important to remain alert and to constantly adjust yourself to your environment. You snooze, you lose!

Yet most tend to experience change as intimidating. People traditionally prefer their comfort zone and, on the basis of individual interests, subsequently treasure the area and field of experience that they are familiar with.

It sometimes occurs that there is insufficient anticipation to market fluctuations in organisations where too many employees remain in their comfort zone. The inevitable consequence of this phenomenon is that their competitors win ground, and as a result such companies will lose market share and subsequently also their profit margin. Budgets are not met sufficiently, and the tension between costs and profits will become increasingly larger. The yield will be under pressure, leading to stormy weather within the company.

The directors could then decide to reorganise, and everybody logically fears for their job. They feel that business was not carried out as it should for quite some time, but hey: that comfort zone felt good and (whether false or not) it gave everybody a sense of security. However, from an integral aspect this organisation is potentially a sinking ship and such a situation calls for rigorous consequences.

For this reason, employees have great interest in change if the organisation for which they work is subjected to severe challenges. They will have to be notified about what these problems are (by addressing them personally), and they should also realise what the consequences will be if policies remain unchanged, as well as what can be done to turn the tide. The employees can be asked what contributions they could make. What could the board of directors do now? The management should not be afraid to share the challenges at hand (preferably also in writing to home addresses, so partners will be notified as well). Explain verbally, directly and unambiguously that the survival of the organisation is threatened (by an internal or an external factor) which might lead to compulsory redundancy. Finally, give a view through challenges and involve all employees in the process of finding solutions.

The interests will change immediately and shall be focussed on jointly restoring the organisation to a healthier state. I once witnessed how employees gave up twenty per cent of their income to ensure that the organisation could successfully rise up after near-bankruptcy. You would be surprised at the willingness of employees to contribute to the restoration of continuity, and the first step can be taken by involving them as early as possible when problems arise. The mutual bond will be reinforced and all of a sudden the company happens to be able to move in very surprising ways. Communal creativity and strength empowers. If 'loyalty' is a cultural value in your organisation, then do not hesitate to communicate openly in the great interest of every employee, provided that you will spread awareness on the harmful consequences to the organisation should delicate information be leaked.

The position of the director has become a highly significant one. He or she is the director and communicator in a crisis situation. Proceeding efficaciously and showing personal consideration for contributions of employees are required here. Change and improvement will only be realised when the organisation is in motion and you will have to create this motion consciously. By stimulating emotions in such a manner is an effective way of initiating such movements. Incitement could be taken to considerable lengths, yet do take heed of the emotional range of people (see page 19) to make sure that you do not emotionally damage your employees in the process.

There are many universal traits that we share as human beings, yet we are often not particularly conscious of these. I will sum up a number of facts which everyone is likely to acknowledge:

1. Everyone who works is bound to make mistakes
2. Nobody is free from sin
3. Nobody is physically perfect
4. Everybody talks about other people
5. Everybody believes in something
6. Everybody labels each other
7. Everybody has their own personal ordeals

We would be right in accusing ourselves of hypocrisy if we would judge others on their blunders or to claim that we are not to talk about others. Such things are simply a fact of life, whether you personally agree with it or not. Indeed it would be so much better if we explicitly state that everybody is allowed to slip up, bearing in mind that this has to be done in a conditioned manner. The conditions on which this could be done are as follows:

1. The customer should not be confronted with your mistakes
2. You have to learn from your mistakes
3. Mistakes have to be repairable
4. A mistake may only cost an x-amount of money
5. The company's core business (primary process) must not be disturbed

A combination of aforementioned conditions is of course always possible. I can tell from experience that if you do not make too big a deal of their mistakes and you give your employees the space to blunder in a conditioned way, it will result in less errors in the future. By adopting such an attitude you take away stress and tensions, and they will therefore make sure that mistakes will not be made again: the responsibility and new confidence will have a salubrious effect on them. They have acquired the confidence and freedom to act. Moreover, their professionalism will be stimulated and further activated. As a result, employees become more creative, resourceful, and they will consider about how they can do better tomorrow, and how to help solving problems. In fact they bring the organisation to a higher level. Mistakes become instructive experiences; feelings of fear and insecurity among employees will increasingly vanish.

Mistakes will be made in particular when the manager, director, CEO or other executive staff behaves in an overwrought manner, often simply out of fear. This has a crippling effect on the employees: they lose the courage to do anything. They are anxious about being penalised severely for their mistakes. They will then do whatever they can to hide their fault from the management, while the management only sees higher (restoration) costs. Especially in times of difficulties it is absolutely essential to give confidence to employees: their true capabilities are often dramatically underestimated. A mild attitude is of crucial importance: lessons can only be drawn from slip-ups which are overt and plainly visible.

Sharing and mirroring experiences (especially bad ones) with co-workers could very easily be interpreted as gossip and slander. There are, however, conditions in which this could be carried out correctly: it must serve a collective good! It has to actuate people, it has to get people thinking (raising awareness) and it has to bring perceptiveness into people's thoughts and acts. Above all it has to be done openly and the involved 'wrong-doer' must not be put at a disadvantage (stigmatisation, loss of