

# HOW TO CREATE A SENSE OF BELONGING

ICS director of associations, **Christoph Raudonat**, outlines management trends to help you master the year ahead.



**A** new decade has dawned. Many of us look forward to new projects, new opportunities, new challenges. We certainly can expect further changes and development in the world of work, be it via technological developments or new approaches to managing people and organisational models.

In recent years, we've also seen an increase in mindfulness, reflection practices and 'moments to find the true me'.

So, rather than going for predictions as to how big our businesses will grow, where the new markets are located, and in which funds to invest, let's look inwards:

- 1. Manage things you can control:** Yes, we know our organisations take time to react to new opportunities. Frustration and exhaustion may kick in every now and then. And the workload does not disappear either. At moments like these, we may risk falling into a burnout trap. Listen to yourself and recognise early signs in your co-workers. Rather engage in sprints than a marathon. After each sprint, put in a circuit breaker. Reward yourself and your team and then tackle the next step. This will help you remain in control, maintain ownership and keep spirits and motivation at higher levels.
- 2. Authentic leadership:** It is perfectly ok to show vulnerability. If you do not know what lies ahead, chances are others don't know any better. Find like-minded people and communicate authentically, even within your own team. Past results have shown that when crises hit, those organisations that invited everyone to participate in shaping the strategy of the future recovered faster as they allowed for an open communication culture. Leaders were not ashamed to admit that they did not have the solutions and were not ignorant of the good ideas that came from sometimes the most unexpected staff members.

**“Kindness is the single-most reason that people thrive at work.”**

- 3. Support your staff:** Being a compassionate leader also means that you have the empathetic ability to listen and capacity to understand what is going on in others' minds. People who feel authentically supported and listened to will walk the extra mile because they can grant themselves ownership over their actions.
- 4. Kindness matters:** It was not a long time ago when mentioning the word 'kindness' in a job interview got you a few pitiful smiles from the HR sharks that were out to eat you alive and test your suitability to work for their organisation. This trend is definitely changing and 2020 will (finally!) see more kindness at work. Kindness is the single-most reason that people thrive at work and it is measured in the mental and emotional wellbeing of the people who spread and receive kindness.

Last but not least, it is in the sense of belonging that we find satisfaction at work. It is the identity we (allow ourselves to) put forward, which provides us with the drive and motivation to be better and reach our goals. ■

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