

WhitePaper: The Disney-Fallacies

Creating healthy relationships – in life and teams



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OrgIQ Manifest: Passion for People builds Systems for Success

OrgIQ is a framework that changes how we see organizations. The core idea is to truly think from the perspective of the individual. Every person has their own reality, based on their network of relationships. Each perception and perspective is unique. There is no right or wrong.

Any organization is simply the overlap of all these networks. This is complexity. We can never fully model or understand it. But we can give direction and purpose to each individual element. Intelligent organizations embrace this complexity rather than simplify or ignore it.

When we focus on human complexity, the solution space for common problems dramatically increases. We believe this harmonizes business practices and structures with the natural dynamics of human relationships, psychology, and social interactions.

Our manifesto reflects our lived experiences and successes. We've seen the transformative power of fostering genuine connections, embracing individuality, and leading with purpose. OrgIQ helps create smarter environments where empathy, understanding, and mutual respect thrive, allowing every individual to feel truly seen, heard, and appreciated. This creates a space of emotional safety, which is essential for individuals and groups to reach their full potential.

We believe in value over control. From OrgIQ's perspective, we understand that control limits the capability of the system by breaking the human perspective, creating overhead, and fostering mistrust. Relationships and trust unleash extraordinary productivity and satisfaction. The achievement of the purpose is measured by the results.

Join us on this journey to redefine organizational excellence. Let's build intelligent systems, embrace complexity, and simplify happiness. Welcome to OrgIQ, where the true potential of your people thrives your organization.

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The Double-Disney-Fallacy

The Double-Disney Fallacy comprises two misconceptions about the nature of relationships, deeply embedded in our minds through stories, songs, and movies. The first fallacy concerns the goal of relationships, and the second pertains to the concept itself. Interestingly, these fallacies extend to teams and all forms of organizations where people come together. We humans think in patterns and unconsciously apply them wherever they fit.

Let's start with the concept. This model, inspired by Vera Birkenbihl, is practical for understanding relationships. I usually use the image of a bridge between hearts, but here, her model is more useful.

Fallacy 1: The Melting Pot

Imagine people as ancient pillars. When two people enter a relationship, they merge into one. This means each person gives up a part of themselves to fit together. As a result, individuals no longer remain whole, independent entities but exist only within the union. This leads to inner conflict as they must discard parts of themselves.

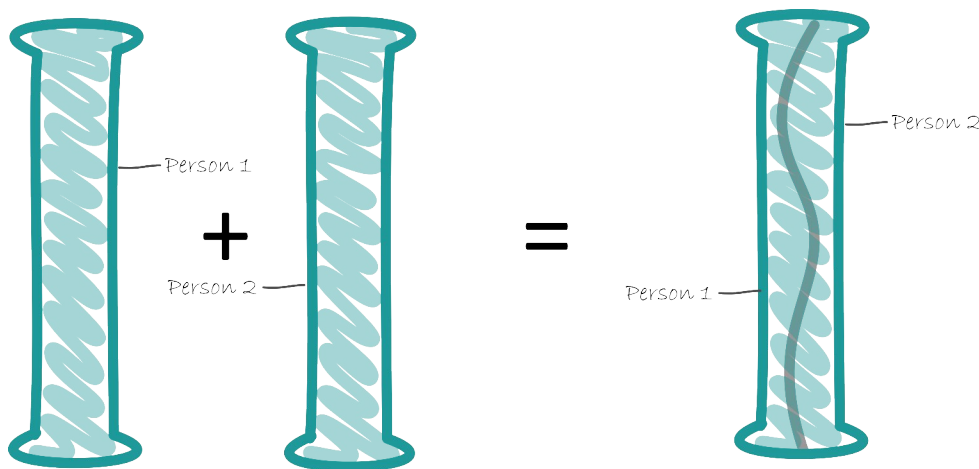


Figure 1: The romantic view on relationships. But also the corporate view.

In teams or organizations, this is even more pronounced. Individuals must give up more of themselves to belong. Brené Brown aptly says, "The opposite of belonging is fitting in." To fit in, we lose parts of ourselves. Which is: $1 + 1 = 1$

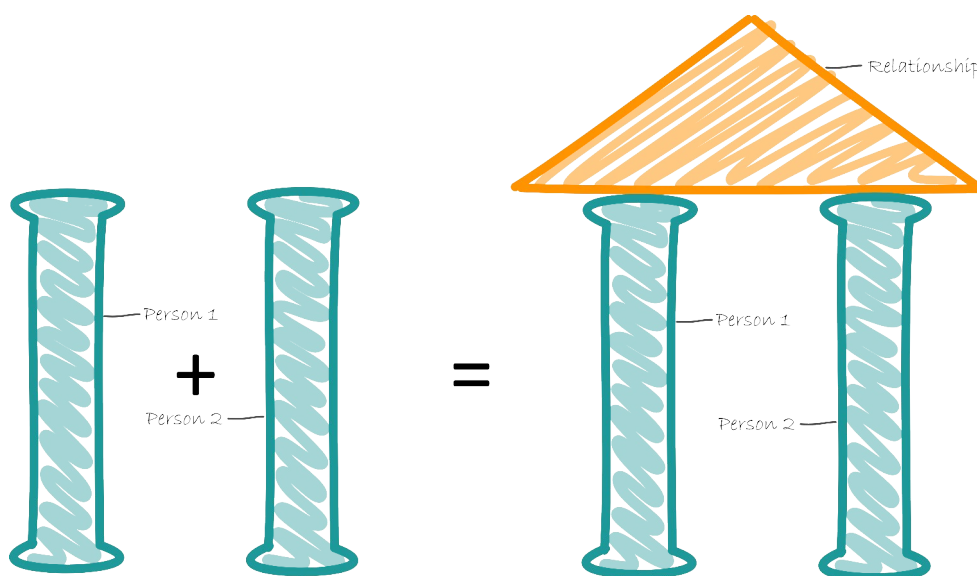


Figure 2: A more healthy perspective. This is also the concept of interdependence from Stephen Covey (7 Habits of Highly Effective People)

So, what's the non-Disney alternative? $1 + 1 = 3$.

We remain whole individuals and build something new together—the relationship. This relationship has a shared purpose. Relationships are never an end in themselves; they should serve the question, “What can we contribute to the world together that we couldn't alone?”

This model applies to teams and larger groups. We will explore this further with an example to internalize and resolve these principles.

Fallacy 2: The Gym Principle

Understanding that relationships are independent entities and that individuals must remain whole and grow leads us to the main problem: “...and they lived happily ever after.” This Disney principle suggests that finding the right person means everything will be wonderful. We invest all our effort in finding the right person and assume the rest will magically happen.

Why doesn't this work? It's like joining a gym but expecting to get fit without exercising. The focus should be on training and maintaining the relationship, not just finding it.

Let's explore some effects of this fallacy:

- ▶ You attract people who reflect your true worldview and beliefs. As you develop your Deep Soft Skills, you seek out similarly developed individuals.

The assumption that the search is the real work has led us to invest so much time and money into our masks, facades, roles, makeup, games, and manipulations that it consumes 90% of our resources. These very games prevent us from truly meeting one another.

- ▶ Finding the right person is only 3% of the work. Building and maintaining the relationship is the remaining 97%.
- ▶ There is no single “right person.” Many people could be potential partners, but relationships require effort and time to build and maintain.

These are the essential 97% that we miss, thanks to the Gym Principle. We stand at the starting line, expecting things to happen magically, and then wonder why it doesn't feel right. A healthy approach to getting to know someone should quickly and openly establish the foundation: “Hey, I like you, let's start building a relationship.” This way, we don't waste resources on the perpetual search for the “right person,” who, by definition, cannot exist because once we have someone, everything else seems more attractive—unless we create an additional, deeper value: the relationship itself.

Only by building a relationship do we create something irreplaceable together. Every person is valuable and, therefore, replaceable. But if I spend ten years building a relationship, it will take another ten years with a new person to reach that same point. This consideration makes us think twice.

- ▶ Relationships need continuous care and growth. Stopping at the starting line means nothing happens, leading to dissatisfaction.

Building relationships involves seeing, hearing, understanding, and touching each other. Without openness, there can be no genuine relationship. Masks and facades prevent connection.

Relationships require constant maintenance. The belief that a relationship is complete once established leads to its downfall. Relationships need continuous investment to thrive.

These principles apply to teams as well.

How It Works In a Team

In a typical mechanistic organization, we are all just cogs in a machine. My humanity is stripped away, and only a small part of my function is needed. This also applies to teams. Everyone has a role, and everything else must be set aside.

Language shapes our images and perceptions, so the first step is to stop viewing teams as clockwork mechanisms and start seeing them as networks of relationships. Each person is a pillar supporting the result, the purpose. This shift is a significant first step in changing the worldview within organizations.

When we do this, we often start with an ideal image. It might look like this: We have a shared purpose supported by many wonderful pillars.

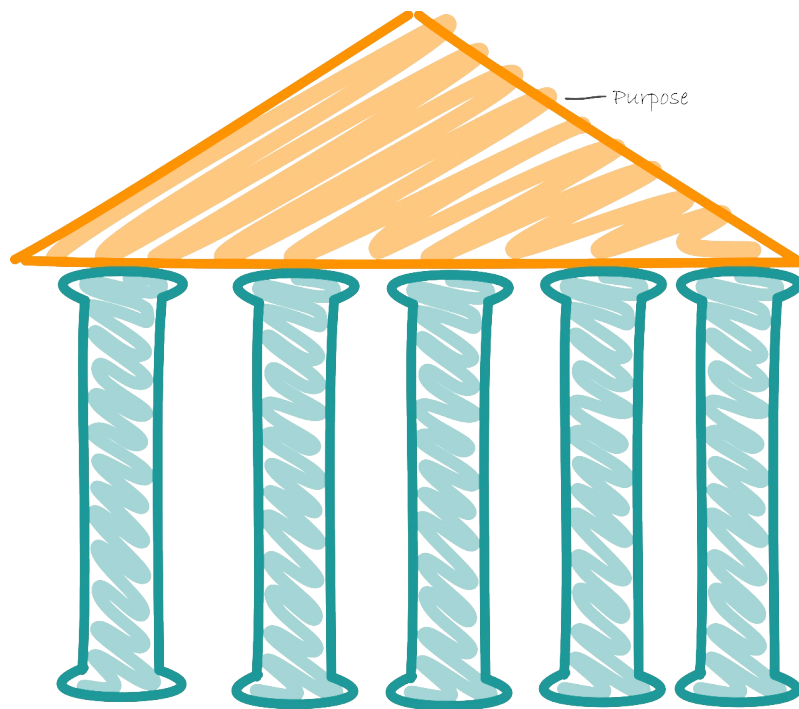


Figure 3: The “perfect team”. Great, identical pillars support our purpose.

At first glance, this seems perfectly fine. But hidden within this image is the “humans as machines” mindset. Everyone is equal, and everything is simple and perfect. But that’s not how it is, nor how it should be.

Standardized teams might be predictable, but they are neither complex nor productive. For a potato field, uniform pillars are great, but not for creative work.

What is the actual reality when we look closely and beneath the surface, considering Deep Soft Skills?

If we just gather a group of people without training their Deep Soft Skills or considering their resignation levels, we end up with a chaotic mess. This is the normal situation, and it will remain so because we think, “the right people will make it work.”

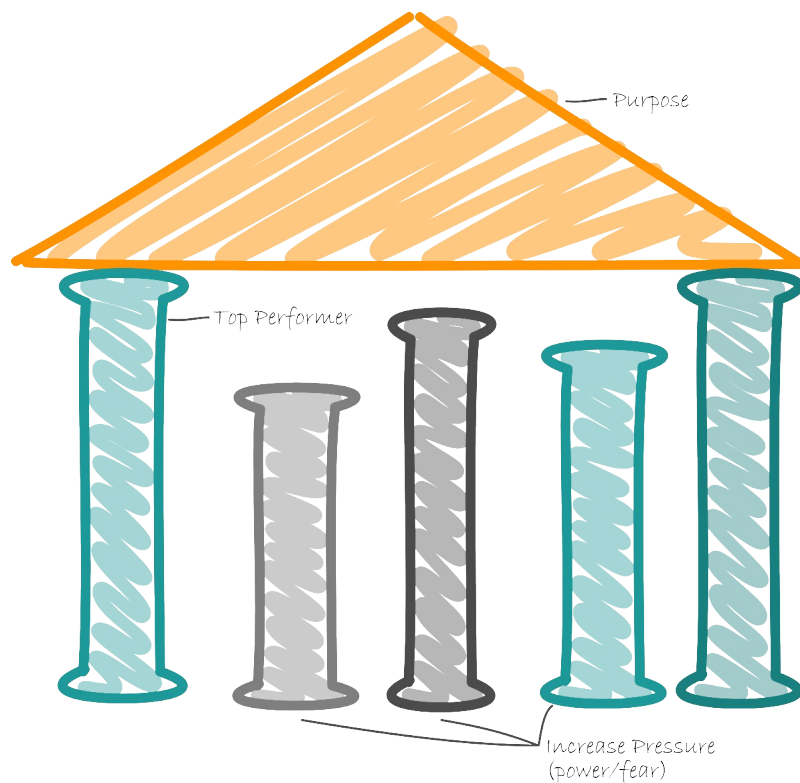


Figure 4: How we start (and end) in real life, with the mechanistic view. The environment fits for a few high-performers, and the rest is stupid.

In such teams, there will typically be one or two top performers who seem to carry the entire load. This perception creates additional pressure on those who feel left behind (resigned). This pressure may not even be consciously recognized but manifests as an internal feeling of "I'm not enough."

If we don't actively address the situation, it will persist.

In classic management, the focus would be on nurturing and promoting the top performers (until they reach their level of incompetence and remain unhappy forever) while speaking poorly of the underperformers.

Here's where leadership comes into play. The real task of leadership in teams is to look beneath the surface and invest time and resources in building relationships. Every person in the team needs to connect with others. It's not about the maximum number of relationships but at least one deep connection.

Leadership comes from a different worldview, a systems view. We know that everyone is needed in the system. Sometimes, we need to work on the environment first.

Leadership creates a context, an environment where everyone can contribute in their own way. Differences in performance aren't an issue. The way our abilities are distributed differs too. The important thing is that we all contribute.

Who produces the most value is often hard to see. In an interdependent system, everything relies on everything else. We need each other. This overlap of individual skills and uniqueness leads to increased productivity.

It also becomes clear that everyone is genuinely needed. No one is undervalued or compared.

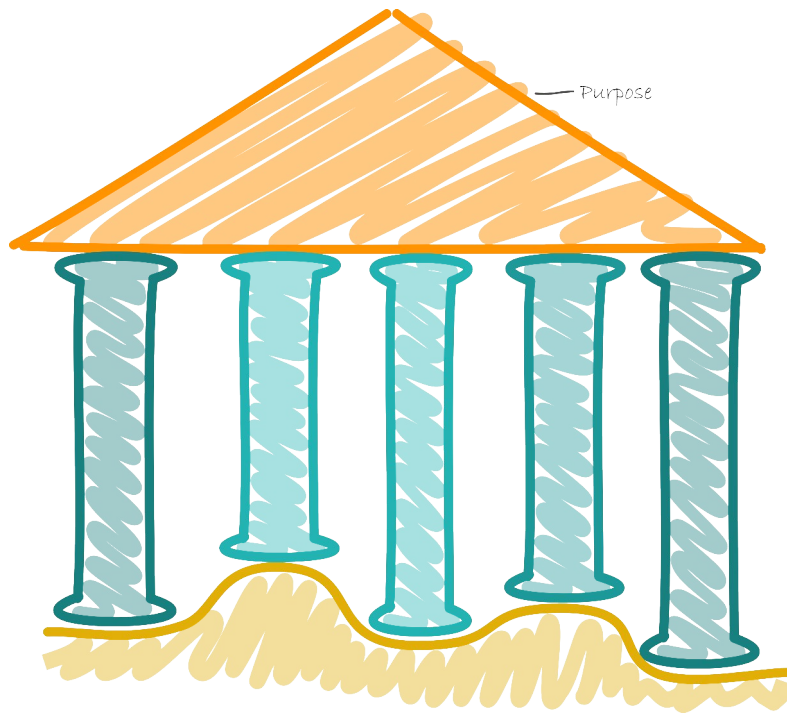


Figure 5: When I see the world differently, I begin to adapt the environment so that everyone can contribute their best.

In my life, I've experienced only once where a team was systematically developed, and this development was refreshed when the team composition changed. This was based on OrgIQ methods.

Otherwise, a lot of talk happens, but ultimately nothing is done, at least not on the DSS level.

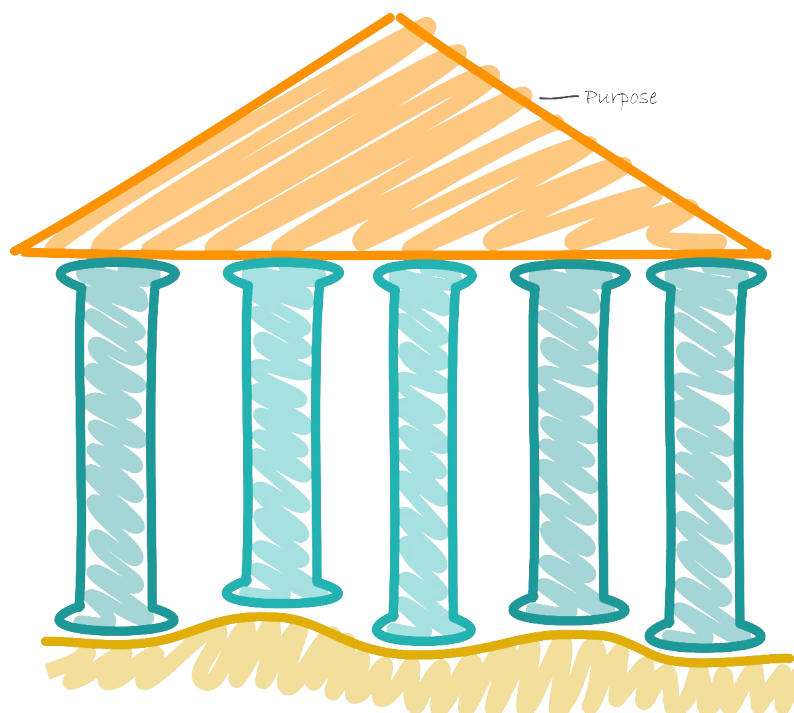


Figure 6: In a perfect team, it's not about making everyone the same but about allowing each person to contribute their unique strengths. To achieve this, we must first identify and nurture these unique qualities.

This is just the starting line. The moment a relationship begins (when all parties are willing), it's just the beginning, not the end.

Believing in each other empowers growth and change. It impacts each individual (as we represent with the pillars) and the team's dynamics. Everything becomes possible.

Notes on Tuckman's Group Development

There are well-known models that describe group or team development. One famous model, still taught in many seminars, is Tuckman's model with its phases: Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and sometimes Adjourning. [see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s_stages_of_group_development] It sounds appealing: put some people together, and they naturally progress into a high-performing team. Lovely. Almost magical.

So, why doesn't it work this way? What critiques do we have from the OrgIQ or Deep Soft Skills (DSS) perspective?

First, let's give some credit: In 1965, it was a big step to consider these issues. It was a step of growth. But our understanding of neurology, psychology, and sociology should have updated this model at least 40 years ago. So, we don't criticize the initial model, but the lack of challenging the status quo. This model was a good step. But after each good step, the next one has to follow.

Danger 1: Development Is Just Copying

Assuming automation, we will merely reproduce the overall culture within the group, just like using a template. In most cases, we copy the hierarchy, and according to the actual value system, the best-performing person is on top. It will never go deeper (in the sense of Deep Soft Skills, DSS) than the level above. The team will use the same work attitude and perspective. The definition of performance is critical, as are the system's assumptions; basically: do I see a performance ladder or an interdependent system? Nevertheless, the performance of the team is limited by the "template."

Danger 2: Real Development Is Forgotten or Even Hindered

The second danger results from the first one. If we assume that teams develop naturally, we don't help them. In a healthy and socially intact environment, they will have good templates and develop. But those environments are rare. In "toxic" contexts, I develop just toxic patterns. I replicate my environment, and "relationships" only exist on the surface level. So it might look like a team, but it's not because nobody gave them a real chance.

Danger 3: Thinking We Are Done

This danger comes from the model: there are four phases, and then we are done. As if I can build trust in a few weeks and then it's over. This is not true, especially when talking about real trust. Trust in the sense of "prediction of behavior" comes easily. We are quickly "good enough" with this. But relationships and trust need constant work and improvement. They need constant work and maintenance, and they change all the time.

Danger 4: No Such Thing as Team Development

This leads to the core critique. A team in itself is a model—a huge simplification of reality. Most of the time, it's an averaging model, a replacement for a pack or a family. But as we've learned, what a family or pack or any group of people is, is perceived differently by each member. There is no coherent and consistent picture or status in a team. A team is the superposition of all individual states and relationships, thus always complex and more or less undefined.

Let's assume we have these development phases, but we essentially have them for each relationship between all the people in the team. And they change all the time. Some relationships will be built deep and quick, while others remain weak after ten years. And that's fine because we can't control it. On the surface level, "I got used to you all" might be a valid replacement for trust, but from an OrgIQ/DSS perspective, it's not. We need to create an environment where emotional development can take place, and trust can be built. We can't do those things directly.

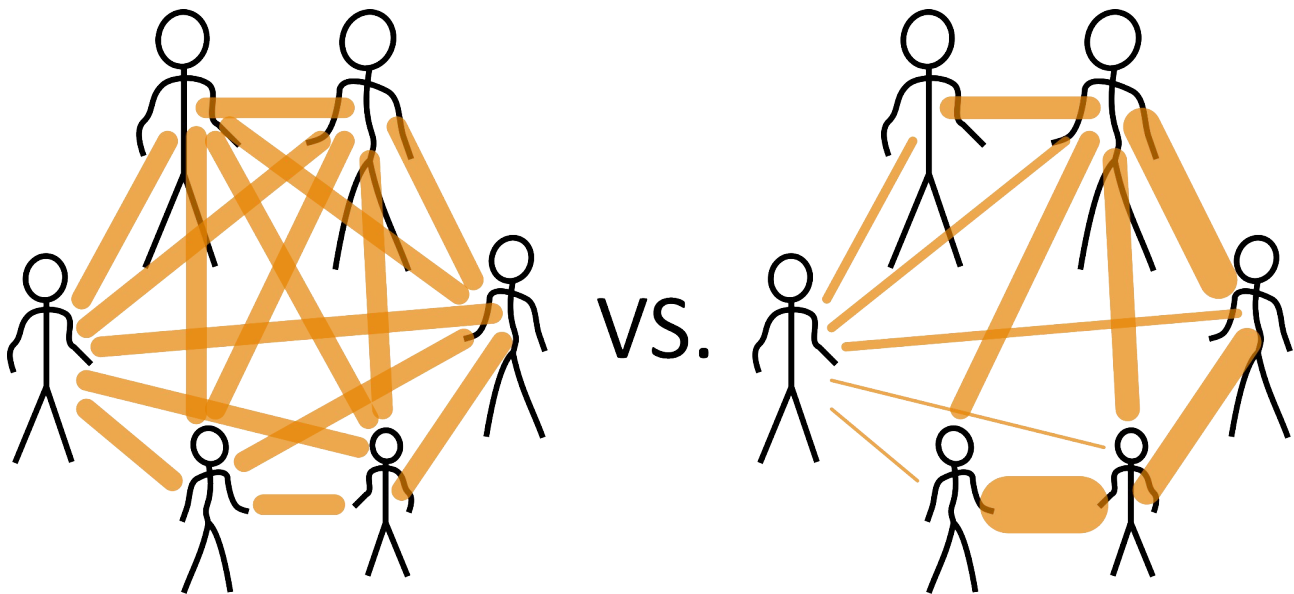


Figure 7: Average standardized view on relationships inside teams vs. a more realistic perspective.

Danger 5: The Fallacy of Averages

As a side effect of the team model, we encounter the error of averages. Our neocortex loves to balance everything and think in averages, but not our limbic system. For trust, it's always the worst experience that matters. Trust is relevant in tough times when it truly counts. As I always say, even a serial killer can say, "on average, I didn't do anything."

Summary

When looking at a team, we see the importance of focusing on relationships and relational skills. This can be facilitated by dedicated individuals or handled by the team itself. In any case, Deep Soft Skills, like all skills, need to be developed and trained.

If we examine current HR processes, the main focus is often on the “dating phase.” The goal is to attract people to the company. After that, little happens. As in many superficial relationships, everyone is initially pleased that the old is over, and the new feels exciting. However, this excitement fades, leading to stagnation (“but we were the perfect match ... why don’t I feel anything anymore?”). The cycle then starts over with new partners.

This approach is not intelligent. Smart organizations do it differently. Leadership consciously ensures that everyone in the team can fully develop and that this collective development serves the purpose of the organization.

We create an environment where team relationships can grow. Everyone must learn (and practice) seeing, hearing, understanding, and touching—and being seen, heard, understood, and touched. This is where we need to leave behind all management thinking. We cannot command bonding and trust. We need a culture that trusts the system. If the environment is right, growth will happen. It requires fundamental trust in social systems and patience.

With these simple measures, we can overcome both Disney fallacies. It is essential that these measures become part of everyday life. Just as we care for our food, we must also care for our relationships. Relationships live in the here and now. They need reality, or else they are merely illusions, self-deceptions, like infatuation.

Love, on the other hand, sees potential and is unconditionally oriented towards growth and development. That is leadership. Leadership does not focus on its relationships but develops the relational skills of its entrusted people. It creates an environment for relationships. In our 8-layer model, leadership is actually the systemic core of “love.”

Leadership does not work in a dishonest, non-committal context. Leadership needs a pack, a team, and an unconditional interest in others. “I do it for you, not for the results.”

Leadership is the reverse of the golden goose. I am not interested in the golden eggs; I just want the goose to be well. The geese take care of the eggs among themselves.

The Fable of the Golden Goose

Once upon a time, a farmer had a goose that laid a golden egg every day. Greedy and impatient, the farmer wanted all the golden eggs at once. He killed the goose, hoping to get them immediately. To his dismay, he found no gold inside and lost the steady stream of golden eggs forever.

The moral: Focusing on the eggs, instead of the goose, ruins everything.

And this development is never finished. I can always become better (deeper, more authentic), but there are always new things to which I must respond. If I see relationships or teams as rigid structures, as something "that just exists," I have already lost.



Figure 1: 8-Layers inner model