**#91 - Measuring conscious leadership: why and how? with Karine Becker**

TRANSCRIPT

Hello therei Welcome to this podcast episode where we'll talk about conscious leaders. Why is it important to have conscious leaders especially for the planets not only for your company but also for the sustainability of our planet? But then also how can we measure whether someone is conscious or not. So today I'm talking with Kevin Becker from higher and higher. She is specialised in recruiting conscious leaders for organisations, and enjoy this episode. I'm Murielle, co mom and educator, I used to work really hard and sacrifice important things to me until I lost my motivation. Fast forward past many failed attempts and lessons learned. And I found a way to reach great results while working less. Today, I'm obsessed with helping other leaders build meaningful lives. So each week, I'll be sharing inspiration to change your life and organisation. This is rebel leader with a heart. Hello, Corinne, how are you? Hello. Very well. And you? Yeah, it's great. It's nice to meet each other here at my place. Usually, we see each other at a co working at the co working perfectly. So it's very nice to have a very beautiful apartment. Thank you. So can you describe in a couple of words who you are? Yes, I am. My name is Kevin Baker. I'm the mother of two daughters. And I'm the founder and conscious leader of higher and higher, higher and higher is an executive search firm. And we focus on the recruitment of sustainability leaders, what we call conscious leaders. Great, great. And so you didn't do that all your life, you decided at some point to transition toward sustainability, but also values, why did you decide to do this transition. So I've done started in executive search in the year 2000. So I've been there for 23 years, nearly all my life. But in 215, I realised that first I want to give back something to the society because I've received a lot. And secondly, I realised also that there's something was wrong with with our planet, and that we were not going in the right direction that we needed to do something else. At that point, I decided to sell my shares in the large group in which I was. And I thought and define and design what I wanted to do for the next years. And it came to me that I needed a purpose, I needed more purpose. And but I still loved recruitment. I loved meeting people, I love matching people with companies, but it had to make more sense. And that's how I decided to create higher and higher with the ID to match candidate who are served have a certain level of consciousness, and therefore a certain set of values with companies. And that is what we do now we're focused, we are a B Corp. Also, we have the certification, the B Corp certification, and we focus on companies who want to do a transition by finding them the conscious leaders that will empower them that will accelerate the transition towards more sustainability. Very nice, very nice. The fight you in this podcast because I think there aren't many recruiters that are focusing on that it's still very classical on auto competencies. And so maybe we can talk about what is a conscious leader because we've talked about it already a couple of times, and we don't have the same definition of a conscious leader. So maybe you can say what you find a conscious leader that is very true and we're in something that is so new, that even the vocabulary is not set and we have invented. So we use words without knowing exactly whether they are understandable by people or not. What we have devised and designed is that to to to be aware of what is going on on the planet, what is going on in our world, you need to develop a certain level of consciousness. You need to have clean air Well, to reconnect to yourself, you need to have done sort of spiritual way to know that there is more than your own and street, individual profit, you need to work for more of a common good. So the way we define a conscious leader is someone who works for the common good. And is guided by a vision that takes into account all stakeholders of the company as well as the profit of the company. It is someone who wants to work for the good of all people, but also for the good, the greater good of the planet, taking into account the impact his company has on the planet. Yeah. Nice. And it is also someone who is propelled by a strong set of values. Yeah, yeah, great. No, and I say we differ but not that much. And because, of course, when I give workshops or transformation programmes, I very much focused on purpose. I always say profit follows purpose, and not with you. Yeah, I completely agree with you. And I even I said, profit here. But usually, I prefer to use prosperity, because I think it defines much more what it is, profit is only material profit, and nearly individual. Prosperity means a whole lot more, it means that you can gain profit with some other ways than just GE Stock Exchange Market. It can be prosperity, because people are happier in the company, because you're gaining other things by doing better things. Yeah, Indeed, indeed. And for me, a conscious leader is also somebody that is conscious of its values, but also his behaviours, his thoughts, his emotions, and especially under pressure. Because what I find is that when you talk with a person on holiday, and that person is relaxed, we all have wonderful values and wonderful goals for sales for families. But it's when we are under pressure in toxic environments, or when we are driven to do what is expected of us. And that expectation is very much driven by money. That's when we start putting our values aside and do things that might not be great for the people or for the planets. Yeah, I completely agree with you. It's because people are disconnected from their values. That they obey to strict processes that needs to be done and that are decided upwards by the leaders of the companies, that you have people that are doing things, and they don't really understand what they're doing anymore. They don't agree with what they're doing. And they lose their their motivation, they lose their sense of purpose. And that is what not what we want to find as candidates, we want to find those candidates worse, still very connected with their values are very connected with themselves. And with nature, because we part of a hole. And we need to understand that we cannot live without the planet we cannot live without what nature is giving us. Those people need to be connected with themselves and with nature to to, to perform well in a company, and then the company will perform even better. I'm a firm believer that a company that is more connected to its environment and its stakeholders is going to perform much better than it is doing now. Yeah, I agree. I agree. And I sometimes like to do a stakeholder exercise with teams where I ask them who are your stakeholders? And now look at what you're doing day to day. What you're doing day to day, where does your focus go most? Does it go most to the headquarters and financials expectations or is it more to people? Is it more to customers and or of course, our planet? Yeah. And there is often a big difference between what they would like to see and what they actually do. Yeah, but they're not always aware of that. No, no, yeah, we have to make them aware of Yes. And a lot of people think they have no choice. Because of course, we like our lives. And we, we like having a nice home, a nice car and nice clothes and going on holidays, going to the restaurants offering good studies to our children. And we're afraid if we don't do what we think is expected, or what society or the shareholders or the board is expecting that we'll get fired, and that it's the same everywhere, and we won't be able to sustain that kind of life. And so I think a lot of people are in a situation where unconsciously they believe they have no choice. If they don't do it, someone else will do it. Yeah, that is true. But it's also being more purposeful is also taking ownership of one's own life. And the only freedom we have in the world is a freedom of choice. Yes, and we have to defend that and what's happening, if something is happening, something bad is happening to you, and you're not happy with it? Well, you have the choice to put an end to it. Yes. And and, and so we have a lot of impact on what is going on. And start by being conscious. And again, it's about consciousness, being conscious of what you buy, and how you eat, and how you sleep. And all those things will have an impact on your environment, on yourself, first on your family, on your kids, and then on a larger scope on your, on your friends and on your company on your work. So taking conscious of a conscience of that is very, very important to make things evolve. And to make sure that you can decide in a company what you want to do in even talking about it. And there's there's no obstacle to just say to your boss, hey, you know, we could do things like that. If he's conscious to an open, he will listen to you, maybe he will not react right away. But at some point, it will make sense. And it will say, Oh, but Ben has told me that a few weeks ago, he's right. Maybe we should do something into that direction. Yeah, we all have a power into that. Yeah. And in my experience, my personal experience, but also the experience I have in coaching and mentoring other leaders is that when you stick to your values, when you dare to question the status quo, when not to do what your shareholders are asking you. Well, that makes you stronger. Okay, it might piss them off on the short term, and they might not be happy you earn the respect, but you get their respect. And especially when on the long term, you start seeing the effects of you're more conscious and sustainable strategy. Because it's will have an effect, maybe not immediately. But for me, it took two to three years. Well, then, then they really respect you. But it takes courage. At first it takes courage. But like you say we see a lot of candidates who are have a certain level of consciousness, yeah, one to two things. And more and more the looking to have more purposeful job and to be able because of course at the level we recruit we have leaders and to be able to influence their bosses, their management, and come up with new ideas and try to change things within the company. Yeah. Great. So now I'm really curious, how do you find those conscious leaders? And more importantly, how do you measure their level of consciousness? Yes, and you're right. This is a very interesting question. We use and we have designed an executive value tool, tool of values based on values. And the first thing I want to say is that putting a filter on the recruitment, sustainable filter in the recruitment doesn't mean it's going to be more difficult to recruit people. It is just not additional information about the candidates and the level of consciousness of the of the candidate. It is also an indication of whether his values match the values of the company. So it means that we don't exclude Would candidate based on the level of consciousness, but rather we give you the indication with with all the candidates that we are going going to shortlist about their level of consciousness and what they are bringing with them in terms of sustainability. So the tool is an online tool, very easy to use, it comes from 400 values or eternalize 400 values. But it is made in such a way that it's very short, it takes 20 minutes to go through. And the candidate after doing it online, at home on his own computer receives a value mapping, a very completed value mapping. And based on that set of values that he has defined as his fundamental values will define a percentage that defines the conscious level of the person. And so now with the with the experience we have of the candidates, because we have to say that all our candidates are going through this tool. So we have a lot of data about this. We know that in Belgium, the level will be between 35% and 85%. And indeed our level of questions. Yeah, of the candidates we've already measured. And do you see progression in the latest years, we see a progression in the latest years see, the mean of the consciousness level is around 66%, and is growing every year from one or two points. But we also see a difference from sector from sectors in arise from sector to sectors and a divide arise also, depending on the function of the person. So that's very interesting. But some at some point, we will use those data to do statistics about it and publish an article on this. So I'm curious which sectors are most, the biggest level of consciousness and which one's the lowest? What do you think that would be interesting? You have no idea, no clue. But I will give you a hint. The sectors that are more interested or intertwine in materiality. And numbers are usually the one who are the least conscious. But there's there are exceptions, because even in those sector, you have companies that are built and that are have a positioning that is only done on sustainability. Yeah. So it's, it's it's very interesting to analyse that too. Yeah. Very interesting. And so I'm also curious, how ready is the markets to weak roots, conscious leaders? Because I, I guess, you can't work with every sector. No, but like I said, I designed higher and higher in 215. At that point, at that time, and we have known each other from that time, it was we were very, very disruptive in our separate business. Talking about that was kind of difficult. We had to evangelise a lot people around this, the pandemic and the COVID crisis actually has helped us because people have taken much more conscious about the state of the planet about the urgent need to change things to change the way business is being done to change how people are being managed. And that's your part in companies. And so, right now, companies are ready and there is a need, yes. What is more difficult is for companies and HR people to realise that I have an impact on sustainability, that recruitment is a way and is a tool to increase the sustainable factor of the company by putting that filter on on the candidate and making sure that you recruit people who can come with their own conditions and bring it to the company. Because imagine you recruit someone and they're when we knew that there still are about 30% of the population who is absolutely not convinced that there is a problem right now on the planet and that it is due to human factors. And you recruit someone like that manage a team. While the team is not going to develop itself into a sustainable way, because if it has to report to a boss that is not aware of anything, it might even need to demotivation of the team because people are looking more and more for purpose in their lives. And so it's important to make sure that you you bring in and you onboard those kinds of people, if you want your company to do fast and through transition, yeah, no, I, I agree. And, but I think it also increases the value of the company. Because we all know that today, it's very difficult to find talents. It's also difficult to motivate and keep young, younger generations into the work. And I often say it's because the system is a bit broken that we are at the end of a system. But the good news is that we're at the beginning of a new system. Yeah. And so if this is something that you put in place, you become more attractive to young people, but also to all these people who have lost their motivation and are looking for a purpose for companies. Of course, an if you have if you hire leaders that are propelled by a vision that are purposeful, that knows what the common good is, while they are going to enthusiast those younger generation to come and work with them, of course, and how many candidates I see that tell me I don't want to work anymore in a company that has no impact positive impact on the planet. Yeah. And it's becoming more and more and not only within the younger generation, but also the older people. Yeah. And that's also taken power that we have, when we choose a company, we can choose a company that has great values. Yes, true. True. And I think more and more young people will do that. So it will be a competitive advantage as well. It will be competitive advantage. And it's, it's it's like the it's like the meal once you've set it, set it up in to work, it will brings more and more of the of the good people working for the company of people with values, bringing values bringing more impact attracting other people. And in the end, what I think is that those companies are going to perform much better. Yeah, I agree. They are going to be more resilient, because being conscious is also being more resilient to various shocks, we are going to encounter this a lot of challenges lying ahead of us. And we need people that are able to embrace them, and know how to how to turn them positively. So that the company can resist that. Okay, well, thank you. Thank you mean, yes, in conversation, very interesting conversation. So where can people find you? People can find us on the web, the company name is higher and higher. With that we have a website, I'll put a link in the show notes. Link on the show note. There is on the on on the site. On the website, there is a link to to promotional version of the executive value tool so they can use it if they want to try it. But if they want to try it any way they can take contact with us through our email addresses, everything is on the website. So that's that's easy to find. Okay, thank you. Thank you. Bye. Yeah, you finished another episode of rebel leader with a heart if you want more, go to rebel leader with a heart.com For show notes and past episodes. If you love the show, subscribe, leave a review and share it with your friends, the more the merrier. Thanks for tuning in and have a great week you rebel leader with a heart