

Dialogues at work

Even though I did not expect much from my conversations at work (I'm self-employed), I found myself inspired by one of my customers this week. I discovered in this conversation that what they hope I can grow my business to the point I would be in management position (I currently am the only employee of my company) as this would allow me to help others to grow. Another customer (for whom I deliver workshops) expressed his hopes I would not be delivering these workshops anymore next year but instead someone employed by me would. This feeling that my customers want me to grow and have success in my company was extremely surprising as I thought they did not care about this (and just wanted me to do the work for them). From this I got the idea to put more focus on this (I currently see this more as something on the side). As an experiment this could lead to put my focus more on this instead of doing MOOCs and other interesting things.

Dialogues at home

Even though I dreaded these conversations, they turned out to be very open. This was the first major discovery. The second discovery came from the conversation with my girlfriend. She told me she wanted me to focus more on my health and not work so hard. This came as a surprise as I believed my motivation to work hard was something she supported (she is also like this). As she likes running I see this as a possible experiment to go running with her once a week. This has the benefit that I do see her more and I work on my health at the same time.

Dialogues in the community

The main thing I discovered through the dialogues I had with the people in my community was that I should be clearer about what I want. Instead of doing something I do not like so much, the people I talked to wanted me to be a happy volunteer in the first place. If this means stopping with my local Scout group or moving into another position in Scouting at the European level than they thought it was OK and they could understand this. From a personal perspective this was a great insight as I realized not enough I should be more direct in things. As an experiment I might impose a Scouting free month on myself to see if this is something I would like.

Compatibility and conflict among stakeholders

The main compatibility I found throughout the different dialogues was the fact people wanted me to grow and to be happy. Whether this was by growing my company, becoming a better boyfriend or moving to a new volunteering opportunity, the central theme was growth. The second thing that was compatible was that people wanted me to be more direct. Most of the people I spoke to wanted me to state it more clearly if I wanted something as this could be one of the factors that is holding me back.

Conflict among the stakeholders existed primarily between the work/study and the home domain as a matter of focus. My customers want me to grow and focus more on my startup whereas my girlfriend wants me to focus more on my personal health and less about work.

Ideas for creating positive change

Idea 1 – No Scouting for a month

The first idea for an experiment is to quit scouting for a month. Instead I will use this time to go running with my girlfriend. Even though this might be a loss for my community life, I do believe it is a temporary one as it also relates to the phase of my life where I am currently in (recent graduate). Also it will have a positive effect on the other domains: I free up time to spend on work, I will become healthier as I exercise more and I will spend more time with my girlfriend.

Idea 2 – Applying business knowledge to volunteering

The second idea for an exercise would be to apply my business knowledge to the volunteering work I do. This will make my contribution in this role more valuable and could lead to better business opportunities as people see what I'm capable of (acting as marketing). However, this would most likely lead to a negative effect for the home domain as it will need me to focus on work and the community more instead of my girlfriend and health.