

Learning points

Past year I have been a member of the board of the study association Lucid. During this year I had fun, felt stressed, dealt with frustrations and irritations, organized more than we felt possible, but most of all I learned an amazing amount.

During this year I fulfilled the roles of Commissioner of Internal Affairs and Vice-Chairman. These roles gave me a lot of freedom and made it possible for me to support various other board members in their activities and responsibilities. Besides this supporting role within the board it also gave me the option to think of my own objectives to help the association as I saw fit.

As the Commissioner of Internal Affairs I was responsible for the smooth running of Lucid activities and secure the connectivity of the members and where necessary increase this. As the Vice-Chairman I was the substitute Chairman, when he wasn't around or not able to do his job I would be the one taking his place. Besides his substitution I was also his support where needed.

Prior to our board year I set some goals I wanted to work on, these goals can be found within my. Although I have grown in most of these goals if not all of these, I have grown more in areas I did not expect.

Saying No

The most important thing I have learned this year is saying no. It has always been hard for me to let people down or disappoint them, I have always been someone that wants to take into account everyone involved and make sure everyone is feeling satisfied with decisions and actions. I always saw this as a positive quality and the only downside I saw in this was the decrease in efficiency within making decisions.

Although this year I have learned what happens if you say yes to too many things. How it can eat you up and break you down, past January I have been diagnosed with a burnout which changed me in a lot of ways. It has thought me the importance of knowing your limits and it has thought me that I have limits and how to recognize them. For which I used to think I could work till I fell asleep and continue the day after.

By knowing these limits and recognizing them I am able to make sure a situation like this won't happen again in the future. Which could be seen as an increase in professional attitude. By knowing my own limitations I can finish everything I do as good as possible instead of just finishing a lot of things at a mediocre level while demolishing myself.

Letting go

I can have an unrealistic feeling of responsibility, which is triggered by my urge to fulfil people's expectations. Which has triggered irritations in the past, when for example someone didn't share this feeling of responsibility. During the first months of our board year I felt a global responsibility towards Lucid and her members. I felt responsible for everything we did as a board and felt like we should have a shared responsibility for everything we did.

My burnout thought me to let go of this unrealistic feeling of responsibility. It has thought me to separate myself somewhat from Lucid, but most of all it thought me to not feel responsible for everything. Before all this I was aware of this unrealistic feeling of responsibility, but now I'm aware that this is an issue and feel like I got the right handles to help myself to limit this in the future.

By being able to let go I am able to separate my personal attitude from my professional attitude, at least at a higher degree than I used to. By being able to separate this I will stop taking things home with me and start being able to separate work from my personal life.

Delegating and Ceding Responsibility

As mentioned earlier I have always had trouble with my sense of responsibility, but besides having a more realistic sense of responsibility I also learned to cede responsibility. Ceding responsibility to other people has been a difficult thing for me in the past. This was mostly triggered by me not trusting other people with certain tasks, especially when I think I'm more capable than them.

However during my board year I was forced to cede responsibility. This reflects in the committees I was responsible for. Seeing I was a board responsible in multiple committees I was responsible for the overall flow of the committee but not for organizing the activity itself. Which was difficult for me in the beginning, I really had to force myself not helping with organizing the activity. However delegating and ceding responsibility is necessary, because there was simply just not enough time to help organize all the events I was involved in.

After I started delegating and ceding responsibility I noticed that others could also finish the tasks at a sufficient level. Sometimes even better and sometimes not at the level which I preferred but it was good enough and it didn't reduce the overall quality of the event at a level I was afraid of. This triggered a change in my mind-set. I actually noticed I prefer being the one with the overview instead of being the one organizing everything.

Proactive attitude

I always used to be a procrastinator a deadline worker and a last minute fixer. During a board year you are a constant deadline worker simply because there is so much to do, the work is never finished. This has changed my way of working, in the past I had to force myself to work on things I for which I had no motivation. After for the first time in my life really having to work 'hard' I didn't feel the need to force myself anymore, not even for the tasks I didn't enjoy. On days where I had a lot of freedom I even started to search for useful things to do, instead of just watching YouTube video's or read articles online.

Planning Skills

During my life so far I had never used an agenda, simply because I didn't need to. I was always able to remember all my appointments, deadlines and other important dates in my head. However past year the amount of work and meetings and the variation of these was too much to remember.

To be able to maintain overview and be able to prioritize all the work that needed to be done I started actively using my outlook agenda, Trello and Slack. I used my outlook agenda for my over

planning of the week and scheduling meetings, Trello was used to maintain overview in my to-do's and slack was used within my board and the TEDx team for organised communication.

Using all these tools finally showed me the importance of an agenda. Or perhaps not the importance but the usefulness of it. It gives a lot of freedom not having to save all these dates in my mind but simply having them on my computer and mobile phone.

But besides learning the importance of an agenda, using these tools also showed me how inefficient I worked mainly due to my way of prioritizing my tasks. The reason my prioritizing wasn't at a level where it should be, was because my overview appeared to be lacking. This was mainly caused by me never visualizing all the tasks I had to do, after visualizing these tasks it was way easier to see which carried more importance than others and it was easier to maintain a global overview.

The influence on my professional identity

Before my board year my way of working could be seen as chaotic, unorganized and inefficient. I usually masked this with my 'Exploratory Design' workstyle, which is a design method I created by translating the way I create my paintings into a design method. This way of working felt natural to me, but now I have learned that this was simply because I never tried working in an organized and efficient way. The reason for this was because I never needed to work organized and efficient, because I could always manage with my previous working method.

My way of working slowly changed during this year, it changed into a more structured and organized way of working. Where I used to keep track of all my to-do's in my mind, I now sort them on my trello board.

It always felt like only flourished while creating or doing something practical (like creating a prototype, programming, etc), but this was simply triggered by my preference towards these activities. My new more proactive attitude lets me also be productive in activities I don't necessary enjoy doing.

Working a year together with my board has thought my what kind of value in bring in a team. I am often maintaining global overview and try to take in account all parties involved. But I can also bring a certain calmness in crisis situations, can listen carefully and repeat the right things to make sure a mutual understanding is formed in discussions. This last thing is something I have noticed throughout my life, often a lot of people say the same thing just a little bit different or simply don't understand each other. In these situations I am often the one that brings these people together with a few words.