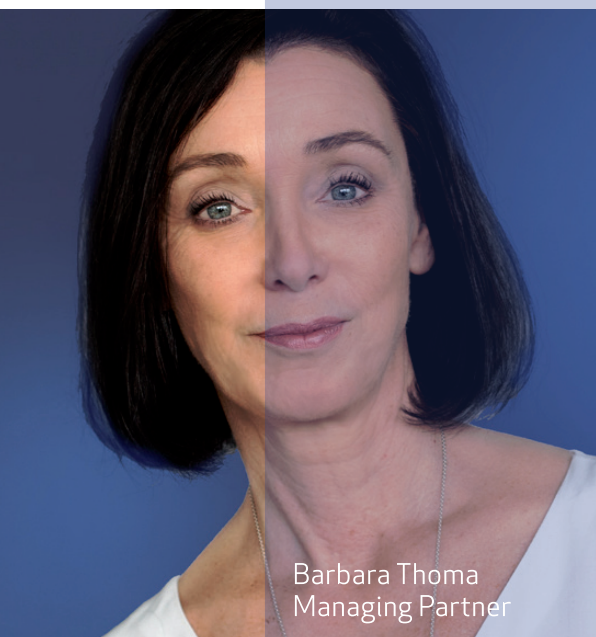


Hybrid Leadership. Already Routine?

Just a few months ago, there was a lot of concern everywhere about how hybrid working could succeed.

In the meantime, the habits formed due to the defacto situation have allowed this discussion to die down: temporary solutions for home office birthed during the pandemic have become more established - and things are

“actually going pretty well”!



Barbara Thoma
Managing Partner

Caught in the day-to-day rapid pace and constant background noise, we lose focus on important, even urgent, topics. And our tolerance for ambiguity and spirit of innovation are challenged by such topics as Chat GPT and a lack of committed employees.

And some obvious things that are “going pretty well” lose their urgency. Thank goodness for our intuition, the vague gut feeling, the little voice in the back of our minds that asks us:

Is our hybrid way of working really going well?

Are our interpersonal connections, our cohesion, dissolving slowly? What will replace the community of a shared working environment once the feeling of “us” created by shared concern during the crisis wears off? How do we create team spirit with new employees who were never knew us “before”?

Labor market indicators show that there are fewer, differently motivated applicants for a growing number of vacancies. As recruiting becomes more difficult, retention is critical!

So how can the transition to hybrid working succeed for employees and companies alike?

Following the newest buzz, I asked this question to the first-generation **Chat GPT**. The answer was quick and correct, but quite general.

Hybrid Leadership. Already Routine?

Here are the headlines:

1. clear communication
2. building trust
3. providing technical support
4. sharing regularly
5. keeping connected
6. maintaining flexibility
7. promoting accountability
8. striving for work-life balance

When we ask the same question to the **ARGO community**, we get similar answers, supported by many personal examples and experiences: from morning “coffee talks” to team-specific attendance arrangements, and many actions to stay “noticeable”. These are high quality initiatives but they do yet amount to an implementation plan.

Here is my suggestion:

Ask your team this question!

There are many answers, opinions, and “lessons learned” out there, but perhaps none that necessarily fit your team’s needs.

Make this question the topic of a team workshop: “How do we succeed in the transition to a hybrid working world?”

1. Present the workshop as a break in the flow of diverse individual experiences and outline the **status quo**.
2. Start the dialog by **collecting the experiences** of what is going well and what is going less well. You can use classic moderation here or resort to experience-oriented techniques such as a “timeline”.
3. Together, take from these discussions what **regulations and agreements** are needed. Prioritize the topics and start documenting clear agreements on them. The point here is not to establish a rule for everything, but to address the areas where the team members feel there is a need. Remember the phrase from group dynamics: “Norms are the personality of the group”. A well-managed discussion will by itself contribute to team identity, and the outputs from these discussions even more so.
4. Steer your people’s focus from the details of the rules to the bigger picture that is being created here: What makes you tick as a team? What is your self-image? How does your team and its role fit into the overall fabric of the organization?

Formulate a sentence about the team’s mission or link the discussion to the existing **mission statement**. For new colleagues, as well as existing ones, now is exactly the right time in the hybrid world to stay connected not only through agreements on everyday working life, but also through shared aspirations.

5. Conclude with a closing exercise that promotes **cooperation**: “I would like...” “I can offer...”. This and similar exercises are simple and straightforward.
6. Finally, it is very important to make it clear that the agreements reached are a joint working hypothesis about the procedures that will enable you to master the transition to hybrid working in the interests of the individual and the organization. Like any hypothesis, however, it needs to be tested! Determine the **frequency that you will meet to determine** how and whether the chosen hybrid cooperation is proving successful or what needs to be adapted.

Initially, I would recommend half-yearly intervals. Reflecting together regularly on the team’s collaboration is useful in terms of content, and also in terms of renewing the feeling of “we”.

With this approach we generate positive impulses in several ways:

- We actively take up the issue of hybrid cooperation and possible problem areas that have become “established” without being discussed.
- We expose ourselves and team members to a meta-discussion about our own way of working, creating awareness of togetherness.
- As the leader, we include new and lesser-known colleagues and take on a coaching leadership style.
- We create accountability for forms of cooperation and formulate clear requirements and mutual expectations at the team level.
- We bring the common sense of the team back into focus, an anchor point especially for the younger generation.

And yes, when properly moderated, these sessions have the opportunity to build **psychological safety** (as discussed in the previous newsletter) in the process!

The ARGOnauts will be happy to assist you!

New!

3 in 1

The 3 in 1 Competence Package: Strengthen Retention, Engagement & Innovation with Psychological Safety

Every manager wants committed, independent, innovative employees who contribute their competence and experience to the organization over many years.

The reality of the job market often paints a different picture. Let’s briefly examine the many causes and then look at the underlying common denominator of all these demands:

Psychological Safety is THE core quality in teams that binds employees and motivates them to think with commitment - a core quality that you will learn in our impulse package!

1. Workshop “Psychological Safety”

Retention, Engagement & Innovation – What is happening in the labour market?

- **Results from current studies shed light on the developments and their causes**

Psychological Safety –
What is it exactly, and can you then still demand performance?

- **On the basis of examples and personal experience, PS is recorded and recognized in the tense field of services**

OK, all clear –
Now how do I develop this in my team?

Investment Impulse Packet (Workshop & Coaching):

2 consulting-days according to agreed daily rate * 6 Coaching sessions per day

- **Intervention possibilities for the manager are demonstrated and practiced**

And if I succeed –
How do I get everyone else to do their part?

- **Starting points to inspire the team and the organization as a whole with this topic are demonstrated and planned**

2. Online Coaching

One-to-one sessions to support implementation, with relevant input: 1 hour per person*

Goal: Participants can assess and address psychological safety in their teams and expand their leadership work accordingly

Christmas 2022 will again be remembered by the ARGOnauts: The creative team around **Christa Slowak** surprised us again this year with a wonderful evening – and demanded a lot of noteworthy photos from us in the course of the ARGOnini Sticker Challenge....



We are saying goodbye to **Arthur Gucci**, who has supported us as project manager. He is heading the newly opened Experience Europe, an exciting European Union project that is sure to rival ARGO's projects!

We are pleased to warmly welcome aboard ARGO his successor, **Mike Finnan**!

The handover took place in an orderly manner and of course at our monthly ARGO spirit!

Currently **Marie Plambeck** is also joining us as an intern from far away Hamburg.

Barbara Thoma

imprint

Barbara Thoma
ARGO Personalentwicklung GmbH
Dresdner Straße 43/DG
1200 Vienna
tel +43-1-369 77 00
mail: b.thoma@argo.at

Barbara Thoma
Managing Partner