

How to make self-organization successful

In search of the real story

Many organizations ask themselves how they can return ownership to their professionals. More and more often, they choose to do this through self-directed or self-organizing teams.

But to what extent does that choice lead to yet another “structural” solution for what is actually a more deep-rooted issue? And doesn’t the structure become a goal in and of itself this way? In this article we share a number of insights – and six practical How-Tos – to help steer you away from the pitfalls we see emerge in many places.

By Wouter Hart

Part 1 – How It All Started

A while ago a man drove his car into an underground bicycle storage facility because his navigation system wholeheartedly advised him to do so. I later read that a house had been rammed by trucks four times in the last six years – also as a result of navigation, according to the owners – and in July 2015 a motorist decided to follow his navigation system’s advice to turn onto the nearby train tracks... The car got stuck, and though the man managed to escape in time, an approaching train collided with the car, resulting in heavy damages to both.

What effect does the use of navigation systems have on our vigilance as drivers? Such technology is greatly helpful, but at the same time everyone can recognize that these systems carry the risk of lulling our driving and decision-making skills to sleep.

We’re a bit less aware of where we are, and pay less attention to the real world around us.

This is not an isolated example; it tells us something about human nature. When my five-year-old son rides on the backseat of my bicycle and I support him with my arm because the road gets a bit rough, he immediately leans into it. The opposite is also true: as soon as I slowly but steadily remove my arm, he holds himself up without support. When it comes to organizations, this principle of human nature leads to the question: “What effect do support structures have on our attentiveness at work?”

The average organization has an endless series of support structures. It also has many examples of structures that make people fall asleep at the wheel. Research shows that adding another control function at the end of a process has a direct negative effect on control alertness during the process itself. In other words, when I know there’s another per-

son after me who will check what I do, it no longer depends only on me and I will become less attentive. Follow me in this thought experiment: put six people to work, let's say, baking a cake. And then halfway through the process, introduce another person who will be their new supervisor. What happens to your bakers? They will expectantly look to the supervisor for guidance, which immediately reduces their own leadership potential. It's quite the paradox: adding more leadership into a group simultaneously diminishes the level of leadership in the group, leading to a lower net amount of leadership than before the intervention.

All hail the system!

Support structures and systems can be extremely helpful. I have plenty of them at home: a number of set rituals that help me through the day, cookbooks to prepare nice meals, expiration dates on food, a smoke detector, a day planner, a filing structure to organize documents, and so on and so forth. These are good things that I would not (and could not) do without, so why would it be any different for the organizations in which we work?

Despite all the usefulness of support structures and systems, I should not turn a blind eye to the very real fact that they also deactivate some part of me. In an abstract sense, you could say that "every system and support structure slowly lulls to sleep the human uniqueness that it is meant to replace". In more practical terms: my day planner makes me forget my appointments, the expiration dates dull my sense of smell and taste, and the ritual and structure cause me to ask fewer questions about what is required in the moment.

For the most part, our trust in and use of systems is very functional. I'd be hard pressed to remember all my appointments by heart, and it's quite the challenge to be aware of smoke when you're asleep at night. Nonetheless, by now many organizations have come to understand that we've completely underestimated the soothing effect of systems and support structures, and that there are far too many of them; this has led to the disappearance of organizational attentiveness in areas where it is needed most.

Time for a change

The excess of soothing support systems is a major issue, because if there's one thing we need in dealing with the challenges we face as a society, it's professionals who are wide awake and attentive.

That is the only way they'll achieve higher quality at lower cost and have the flexibility to react to ever-changing and unpredictable conditions while working together with citizens, customers and chain partners.

It's time to make a clean break from the approach that gave full control to the system, and take a long hard look at all those support structures we've put in place over the past 20 years. We can all feel it coming, and as a response we're deregulating, cutting staff and making the switch to self-directed teams: in short, we're giving the power and control back to the bakers! This will cause them to hold themselves up as true professionals, awake and paying attention to what really matters, right? An understandable reaction and partly true, however... Is this emerging drive towards self-direction not rooted in exactly the same type of thinking that got us here in the first place? A case of "same meat, different gravy"?

Part 2 – The Trend

Self-direction as the answer

Over the past few years Marius Buiting and I have met with dozens of organizations that are employing the concept of self-directed, self-organizing or outcome-driven teams for our book "Verdraaide Organisaties" (Flipping the organization). The energetic enthusiasm and sense of experimentation generated by those visits is remarkable and much needed.

At the same time, we are seeing the same pitfalls emerge time and time again. Pitfalls that can have significant negative consequences for citizens, students and staff, as well as for the projected savings that the shift towards self-directed teams is said to bring about. In this article we share our views on that line of thinking and provide you with six practical guidelines on how to avoid these pitfalls

Buurtzorg Nederland

When discussing self-directed teams, it's hard not to mention Buurtzorg Nederland (BN). Of course, there are critics of the concept, but founder and chair Jos de Blok has put self-directed teams on the map in the Netherlands and is able to achieve results that other organizations only dream of. Some time ago I spoke to Jos at length about his ideas and how BN is structured. I was very im-

pressed with his answers and the consistency of his approach on two levels.

The first level was his *vision*. His vision on clients, and his vision on care professionals and carers and their levels of training and education. His vision on establishing roles and authority levels within teams. His vision on knowledge sharing and how that emerges spontaneously when people put their hearts into what they do. On organizational roadblocks, what care providers do right and not so right, and many other things. In short, a vision that seeks to answer the most crucial of questions that he had when he was a carer himself: “What does a group of professionals really need in order to support people who can no longer cope on their own at home?”

The second level was the *structure*. The structure that embodies his vision – self-directed teams – with the addition of many distinct characteristics: a group of no more than 12 professionals who pull together as a team. There is an IT system that fully supports the primary process and a productivity norm of 59% with ample time for reflection, and at least half of the team members have Bachelor-level qualifications.

My take on what I heard was as follows: a vision and a thought process on the one hand, which seems a bit ethereal and requires a high level of insight to fully grasp, and on the other hand a concept, a structure with distinct traits that are much more tangible and visible.

Careful when crossing!

Some time ago I wrote the epilogue to a book about a regional training center that (in part inspired by our book “Verdraaide Organisaties” red. Flipping the organization) had chosen to start organizing itself in a different way. But first let me share a short anecdote about my son Jasper.

Jasper is five years old and recently earned his “street-crossing diploma”. Soon after, I was carrying him around on my shoulders through the center of town and crossed a street. “Hey Dad,” he called out, more than a little indignant, “you didn’t look!” As a matter of fact I had, and saw that it was safe to cross, so I asked him why he felt I hadn’t looked properly. “You didn’t stand still!” was his prompt reply. I tried to explain to Jasper that I had, while walking, looked, and therefore did not need to stop. He wasn’t having any of it.

I did not properly cross, because in his view I did not exhibit the outward traits of good crossing behavior as he had been taught in school.

It can be an impossible challenge to explain to a five-year-old the difference between the practical execution and the intent and vision behind such a routine process, but it is a very strong example of a human trait that causes us to focus on the way something is done instead of on the vision and intent behind it. We prefer a ready solution. This is the key issue with quality management. Because governing body such-and-such says it has to be done this way, we do it. We blindly start following guidelines without considering and understanding the intent of those guidelines. It’s a ready solution, but this approach comes with the risk of disconnecting us from the responsibility of finding out for ourselves how quality is really established, embedded and improved for that particular situation. It also places a heavy burden on the regulatory organizations who often get lost in discussing the “how” of execution (like Jasper) and put us under the yoke of rules and procedures without considering the vision that started it all.

Another approach is to run a pilot and “implement” or “roll out” the findings and learnings. It’s basically the same thing, copying a structure and imposing it on an organic whole without allowing the people in it to grasp the true meaning on a visionary level. It has no context and doesn’t allow staff to find their buy-in. As a consequence, you end up with solutions that look great on paper, but don’t work in practice. New approaches are introduced all the time, but they all fail to solve the real problem while also costing incredible amounts of money.

In any case, the true question for me is: How do we interpret all these beautiful examples, theories and models? Are we just copying the approach for execution, or are we learning from and getting inspired by the vision and intent behind it? Translating this to our main theme: Self-direction is not the intent or the vision; it is an approach, not *the* approach. And as with any support system and structure, it has the built-in pitfall of distracting us from the real questions.

Sound familiar?

This doesn’t mean that the move towards self-directed teams cannot be supportive to the organization – it surely can, because structure and systems

have their uses and purposes. But by now we can confidently say that very few organizations succeed in truly operating from the vision behind that self-directed approach. We've heard it countless times in organizations implementing self-directed teams: "Self-direction must remain a means to an end and not a goal in itself!" But then this is exactly what happens anyway. Why is that? Because it is so much easier to hold on to structure than to vision, until you've worked through your vision completely and really start living it in every aspect of your organization; then it's no harder at all. It's like learning how to ride a bicycle. When you don't know how to do it, it's really hard, but once you've mastered it, it's easy and convenient.

Getting stuck in structure is easily recognizable by the dogmatic thinking that exists around self-directed teams. I'll mention a few examples:

- The team members rarely accept any more outside interventions, claiming they are now a self-directed team;
- The coaches are focused on the team's long-term growth process, even when the current service levels are far below sector standards;
- The supervisor (who always ends up being present) feels disempowered and confused about when he or she is still allowed to act;
- Staff feel neglected and disengaged;
- The design principle was generally one-size-fits-all, which means that both over- and underperforming teams are held to the same standards, having to complete the same trajectory, sometimes at the same pace;
- Leadership levels are simply cut out in one fell swoop, without providing a viable alternative for a clear vision, necessary organizational framework and staff support;
- The change itself was often designed to be dogma-free and piloted on a small scale, but ended up being "implemented" and "rolled out" all the same. This is most evident in the approach that starts with the best teams that get full support and time, while the remaining and subsequent (lower-performing) teams are expected to simply follow their successful example with significantly less available support and time, completely disregarding their needs and capabilities; and
- Most of those professionals will still regard the transformation as a cost-saving measure, despite their assurances to the contrary.

Sound familiar...

Part 3 – Guidelines

So what should you consider when thinking about getting started with self-directed teams or looking to bring control much closer to daily practice?

Guideline #1

Use your words!

There's a growing awareness that storytelling is key to getting organized. It's very interesting to take a slightly wider scope than just the sweeping stories of the chairperson, and realize that everything that everyone says and does in an organization projects a story that is at times miniscule and at times huge beyond comparison. The sum total of all these stories is mainly determined by human behavior.

What makes Guideline #1 so relevant is that self-direction is just another tool: a means to an end, and by definition not the end goal. So when you place organizational transformation under the header of self-direction, every time you discuss it, you're giving center stage to structure and not to the vision and how to get there. This reinforces human beings' natural inclination to make the means a goal in and of itself, and exacerbates the change pitfall of an inward focus instead of the desired customer service focus.

It is truly an art to use storytelling to create the vision and not rely too heavily on the safety and security of structures. I sometimes say that people are so focused on the structure of things that you'd have to explain the intent about ten times before you can afford to mention structure even once. That is, if you want to prevent them from putting the structure at center stage once again.

As it turns out, the movement you are looking to create is based on sharing the story behind the structure of self-directed organizations, which always comes down to this trinity:

1. Deliver what the customer needs (not what they want), and thus;
2. Let professionals do their job; and
3. Everything else is there to support them.

The working title for the business transformation is important, so make sure it tells the story you want to bring into the light: "The Intent", "Thinking and Acting Differently", "The Student at the Heart of Things" etc., and not the thing itself,

like: “Lean”, “Self-directing Teams”, “Planetree”, “Flipping the organization”, and so on. From there the art will be to repeat that holy trinity in different words every day, in every way, in every form of communication. First and foremost at each team’s first encounter with this concept, because this will provide an anchor point for people to base their next and future decisions on, and will also help to energize them and keep them moving forward. This brings us to Guideline #2.

Guideline #2
Find the “YES”

When my son rides on the back of my bicycle and I drop my arm, his immediate “answer” is that he starts keeping himself upright. He’s basically saying “yes” to being responsible for not falling off the bike. He mainly does this because his sense of self-preservation is developed and he understands the very short and direct feedback loop of not acting (falling off the bike). Employees do not always sense their own interest (benefit) in a business transformation. Change-wise you could just pull your arm (supervisor) away, but is that really the best way forward? After all, you may have told them for 20 years not to take that liberty. More importantly, is it even necessary?

I always pull back my arm slowly and in a controlled manner, so that Jasper has time to respond and can take control. With my three-and-a-half-year-old daughter, I can’t do any of this just yet; she’s not yet skilled enough and might react in unpredictable ways. It’s all about looking at what both of them need and providing just the right amount of support for them to become self-reliant.

Jumping back to Buurtzorg Nederland, one of the keys to its success (one I think is often overlooked) is that every single employee gave an energetic and resounding “YES!” to the concept of taking responsibility into their own hands. It was clear as day that this was “the game” Jos de Blok had to offer. If you weren’t up for that, you simply wouldn’t get to play.

Try to think of the things in your life and work that get your wholehearted “YES!”. Think about how committed and connected you feel to these things, and how much you are willing to do for them based on a sense of responsibility. Now try to think of those events when a choice was forced

upon you, where you didn’t feel like doing something and felt no sense of responsibility. In my experience the difference is so vast that it’s worth allowing your teams and staff some time to find their “YES!” and make that decision for themselves. As long as they aren’t saying “YES!”, they won’t be too bothered if things aren’t working out, and that is the pivotal element for making self-directed teams succeed.

That “YES!” is not as hard to obtain as you might think. People are fed up with systems and feeling like just another cog in a really big machine as they merely get to follow procedure and protocol. I see it all the time: professionals are willing to work harder and shoulder much more responsibility if they can feel like they are actually making a difference. Finding out what is and what is not part of their role and responsibilities is the hard part. When is something a core task, and when is it just a peripheral activity? When is it necessary to understand and feel like a part of the whole, and when is it time to just get on with it? The scores for job commitment and employee satisfaction are very telling: they are consistently higher in organizations where staff can (and are allowed to) feel like they are making a difference.

It’s quite remarkable that the 2014 employer of the year in the “more than 1,000 employees” category is Buurtzorg Nederland. They are not too big on the idea of supervisors, but CEO Ruud Klarenbeek of the category’s runner-up JP van den Bent foundation (for people with an intellectual disability) has quite the opposite view. He believes that supervisors are crucial in keeping the story clear and on track. Opposing views, but a shared vision.

Guideline #3
Dare to differentiate!

If self-direction is a way to empower professionals and/or teams, then the true question becomes: “What does a professional or team need in order to feel empowered?”

An equally crucial follow-up question is: “Does team A need the same thing as team B?” The default answer is “No”, because team A is simply not the same as team B, just like my son is not my daughter. This requires organizations to dare to differentiate, and we’re not very good at that at all because most of us believe that standardization

leads to control and efficiency. If only that was true.

I cannot imagine that an organization that employs a (couple of) thousand people doesn't have at least a few teams that could be fully empowered without their supervisor. So why are the supervisors there? What value do they add? On the flip side, there are probably also teams that could do with two supervisors to be empowered, so why are they not being added on? Don't blindly follow the dogma; do what is necessary!

Why not ask the team members themselves what kind of leadership they need to feel empowered? Let them take responsibility. They're likely to make more of an effort to show that things can work that way, because it was their idea, right? The question here is: "What do they need from the organization to stand on their own two feet?"

Guideline #4 **Set the stage**

When looking at what a team (with or without a supervisor) really needs in order to take responsibility, a number of conditions are very important. The first condition concerns team composition.

Let's go back to Buurtzorg Nederland. Jos de Blok mentioned two very interesting things about team composition. The first was that every organization can be broken down into singular units that can address integrated customer requests, not unlike a franchise structure in which the micro-enterprises are not continuously dependent on others to get things done, preventing loss of quality and long throughput times that generally come with multiple handover points. These teams are in control and capable of delivering most of the customer value on their own, which of course also means that they have no process to hide behind: they are clearly the responsible party.

The second interesting thing was that in the Buurtzorg teams, at least half of the members needed to possess a Bachelor's degree. That in itself is not too interesting; it's just another piece of structure. What *is* interesting is that Blok had a vision for this. It answers the questions of what a team needs in order to be self-reliant and deliver high-quality service, and what composition is required to make it work.

Furthermore, people need a framework. Boundaries help people determine the space they can enjoy and utilize. It's not very useful to send a team out into a greenfield situation and let them figure it all out for themselves. A framework doesn't need to be complicated; it's about relevant rules and regulations, a financial component, the vision and a set of organizational values. Defining the framework should answer the question: "When do a team's actions and decisions become unacceptable?"

Another thing teams will need is support. The aim of self-directed teams is not to just let them figure things out for themselves; it's about doing whatever it takes to empower them professionally. This requires thoughtful consideration for everything that goes on in the organization. Simply put, if staff do not develop a supportive mindset, if the dashboards don't evolve accordingly and if the auditors hold on to their systems-oriented thinking, the storyline splits and becomes incomprehensible, making forward motion extremely difficult. Of course, the idea is not to change everything all at once, but eventually everyone has to get on board.

Guideline #5 **Keep checking the pulse**

Starting to work with self-directed teams, or "as self-directed as possible" teams as we should be calling them by now, is about eliminating barriers that prevent teams from taking responsibility. It also involves organizing a number of matters better than before, for example in the way things are monitored.

The old way of doing things was based on the assumption that reality could be captured in a dashboard. "What gets measured gets done" was the age-old maxim, but nowadays we've come to understand that the essence of things that truly matter cannot always be measured. Or, alternatively, the process is so indirect that the feedback loop and learning opportunities become slow and untraceable. So what *can* you do?

Let's momentarily switch to everyday life. If we want to know how someone is doing, we can amass an endless stream of information with all the big data and medical possibilities at our disposal. Of course, this comes at a considerable cost, and you could wonder what the impact on the daily life of that person would be. Those are just two reasons why we probably won't start measuring everything we possibly can. However, monitoring vital bodily

functions in itself is not a waste of resources. It's a good idea to do a check-up every now and then, and when someone is ill you'd want to monitor some simple indicators like temperature, heart rate and perhaps blood pressure.

In recent years, organizational dashboards have become cluttered with all sorts of available management information, which raises a few problems. First of all, it's expensive and time consuming to gather and analyze all that information. Secondly, the plot of the story disappears under heaps of data. What you measure creates the story you can tell, so you'd better make sure you measure the right thing. Third and finally, whatever you measure is what will get attention. And if it turns out that things like personal attention and "click" are immeasurable, you'd be looking at the less important things by definition, which leads to making unimportant things more important than they should be, pushing the things that really matter to the background.

That's why it's a good idea to not just measure everything you can, but to find the true indicators of how the organization is performing and to embrace the fact that there's more to life than what we can measure in a spreadsheet. This means that besides working with a limited amount of measurements, we have to do more.

Back to the question of how we can find out how someone is doing. There's a very simple and ready-to-use method in which you simply ask the person: "How are you doing?" Based on the answer, you can have a conversation that will provide you with a lot of information that you would not get from a dashboard. The technical term for this is "narrated accountability". You could ask teams how they deal with dilemmas or you could present them with a case study. These conversations produce a great deal of information, but are also crucial to shaping and strengthening the organizational story.

Another option, in addition to a limited amount of measurements and narrated accountability, is observation. You only really find out how a person is doing by observing them in practice. You can ask a chef how hot the oven was and how long the dish had been in the oven (what appears on the dashboard). You could ask how they prepared the dish and if they think it will be tasty (work-related stories). You could even ask customers what they thought of the meal. But if you really want to know

what the dish was like, you'll have to experience it for yourself by tasting it. Now, when does your supervisor ever simply tag along while you are going about your job, just to see how you are doing what it is that you do? This would perhaps be a bit awkward or tense at first, but could eventually be a solid start to a meaningful conversation.

Even more important than this monitoring trinity is the realization that your most important control mechanism as CEO or supervisor is not the dashboard, not the conversation and not the practical observation. It is the very simple question to the team: "How do you know how well you are doing?" That is the mindset change that needs to be made, first and foremost. The answer to that question will either inspire confidence or not, but much more importantly, the team that sets out to find the answer for itself will become acutely aware of its own responsibilities.

Monitoring is not a blight on trust and confidence; it is the key to learning and having a meaningful conversation. This does require us to take another look at the complexities of modern-day life and collaborate to make the mindset shift from demonstrable to plausible and from measurable to noticeable. This will take some time, making it a priority to involve (internal) governing bodies. It can also be a key element for strengthening the organizational story and collaborative learning.

Guideline #6

Celebrate success and keep up standards

Time and time again I've returned to creating the story. The reason for this is that people need something to connect to. When that's no longer provided by watertight protocols, they'll turn to the meaning and interpretation of the vision and the organizational values, which are the foundation for celebrating successes.

There are of course many different ways to celebrate milestones, but I'd like to touch on two related points. The first is how you give feedback and how to make sure that's in line with the organizational vision. Feedback creates an important element in the fabric of the organizational story, and that's where I see it derail all too often.

Recently, I invited an ex-CEO of a care facility as a speaker to a group of alumni for our "Flipping the

organization” training. He told a story of how he had embarked on a mission to swap all the “can’t” and “not allowed to” thinking regarding organizing happiness for the residents of the care facility for a “YES!” culture perspective. He shared that at some point a situation emerged where the son of a resident had put a rusty screw in a brand new front door, because his mother had hinted that she’d like to be able to pull a cord to close the door behind herself once she’d gotten inside. Some commotion ensued where staff was of the opinion that this was simply “not done”. The speaker might have had his opinions on whether a rusty screw in a brand-new door was a classy solution, but his vision was that showing some initiative to serve the residents’ interest was much more important. At that point he had the choice to highlight one or the other side of the story, and to him it was evident that the son was to be commended above all and that he wanted to see more of these initiatives. Further to that, he even suggested that it was worthwhile to find out if it would be a good idea to find a suitable (and possibly classier) hook to place on each and every door, which turned out to be a great idea. He made important what he believed to be important.

I am sure there will have been some grumbling from the people who had been upset initially, but meanwhile they’ve all heard the story that the speaker wanted to put out there. What behavior do you really want to see from your teams or professionals, and how do you make sure – especially when it goes wrong – that people keep feeling the message?

The second point I’d like to highlight is an extension to what you just read, but the exact opposite side of it: the keeping up of certain minimum standards. It is a simple fact that in some cases it’s downright irresponsible to let teams be self-directed. Their quality dips below a certain line and that can cause all sorts of harm, which is completely unnecessary.

Taking a stand on standards is another valuable addition to the organizational story, but more importantly, it is your moral obligation towards your staff and customers not to cause or sustain misery through dogmatic self-directed thinking. When I noticed that this was happening in an organization I worked with, I introduced the possibility for someone to use the safety sentence “Stop, hold it!” Someone from within or outside of the team could use this phrase, which would start a process in

which the team would look at what was happening and what it would take to get to a point where there was a healthy way forward towards self-direction. Part of that process could be saying goodbye to team members, adding a supervisor again or whatever else was needed.

Part 4 – Final Thoughts

What it keeps coming down to is that in the process of creating attentive and aware professionals that focus on the needs of citizens, students, residents or customers, we ourselves also need to remain attentive and aware to pragmatically do what needs to be done.

As soon as a dogma emerges, free thinking disappears, and it’s not an easy thing to stay dogma-free because it is so enormously gratifying to pin things down and keep them in their place. It’s impossible to say whether following a recipe when cooking is right or wrong. For a less accomplished chef, it can be very convenient to have a guideline to follow, while a master chef would feel severely limited in his creativity and opportunities to make use of weekly promotions and locally available produce. It is much more important to leave the responsible person in charge – in collaboration with a colleague or supervisor for support, if needed – to get the desired outcome of a tasty meal. It is important to note that even a master chef will sometimes find himself restricted to the limitations of a recipe to achieve a successful outcome.

As soon as something is nailed down, the reflective process behind it is often lost. At the same time, some things just need to be set in stone for people to be able to do their jobs with peace of mind. It could be useful to set a date on which all teams will operate in a self-directed manner, and then watch from a distance to monitor how good things can happen for some (or maybe all) teams. I’d almost go so far as to say that the dogmatic avoidance of dogmas should also be avoided at the risk of overshooting the mark.

In the end it all comes down to taking a stand behind the self-direction movement as a team and organization to:

1. Deliver what the customer needs (not what they want), and thus;
2. Let professionals do their job, and
3. Everything else is there to support them.

And to have fun while learning together in the process. This is really possible in the Netherlands because we've got it pretty good. We have a beautiful country, and it always delights me to drive from Belgium onto our silent and straight roads that have immaculate signage. Or when I return from other continents and feel complete trust in our judicial system and the quality of our hospitals when things go wrong. Thank you so very much, world of systems.

But... when we get into a car and hit a detour, there is sometimes a sign that says: "Switch off navigation now". At times like these, it is good to sit and think about where you are and where you want to go. Fortunately, people who build roads also know that it's important for us to really be attentive and aware behind the wheel. That's why they put the sign there.

Our list of guidelines is nowhere near complete, and as a rule we try to keep it that way. What we do attempt to accomplish is to share some useful insights for those of you who have a use for them. On top of that, we're building a movement of people who share our belief that things can and must be done differently, and who are willing to learn with others. If you're interested in reading more and seeing inspiring video examples, or if you'd like to join us in learning and building towards "purpose-based organizing", check out our website: www.lostincontrol.org

On behalf of Marius Buiting, the many managers and others who have already joined, and most of all on behalf of the client, the student, the carer, the teacher, the citizen, the public servant, the resident and all other "customers" and professionals in the Netherlands, I wish you the best of luck in making the transition to self-directed teams if that structure works for your organization.

Always keep wondering!

Best regards,

Wouter Hart