

## CHANGING PERSPECTIVE AS A KEY TO SUCCESSFUL CAREER TRANSITION (OR CHANGE PROCESS)

### 1. What is a change of perspective and how does it work?

For me the change of perspective has always been a pillar of success in social interaction. In psychology a change of perspective is considered to be "a basic principle of intercultural learning". In today's multicultural society and economy we are confronted with many different cultures when looking at employment.

Changing perspective is understood as the ability, and willingness, to recognize and understand thoughts, emotions, motives and personality traits of another person, and is termed "empathy". A change of perspective will help me recognize modes of behavior that are hindering cooperation, and as a result I will be able to reflect on them and change them. Therefore, a change of perspective is considered a valuable tool in the context of coaching, and is part of the social skills. In the case of outplacement and career counseling, a change of perspective is not only the understanding of one person, but usually includes more than one person: i.e. those representing the employer (e.g. HR partners, managers, colleagues and collaborators).



**MARK RICHTER**

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Successful Career Transition  
(or Change Process)**

The February ACF Europe Newsletter will feature an article by Herbert Mühlenhoff (Managing Partner at Mühlenhoff + Partner GmbH and Board Member of ACF Europe)

### 2. The separation situation

The separation is at the beginning of an outplacement program. For many people affected, this can come as a surprise, particularly when the separation is not in the context of a larger restructuring of the company. But even then, the question arises, why am I affected (and not one of my colleagues)? This is the first situation in which a change of perspective is very valuable and part of the reflection on the separation situation. Is my dismissal an answer to my attitude or my behavior? Which requirements did the organization have for my job? Were there situations where I did not meet those requirements in my attitude or my behavior? In which points might the perception of my former superiors differ from my self-perception, possibly to my disadvantage? Is this perception of others accurate?

One of our clients once informed his superior that he only wanted to stay with his current function for a limited time, because he wanted to reorient himself externally. Within the next restructuring, this became a reason not to transfer him to a new responsibility. He was let go despite his excellent qualifications. Our client had not understood the impact his communication might have on his position.

### 3. The career/life balance? Balancing your career

As part of the career balance, recurring themes or recurring problems may arise for the coachee, in that over a prolonged period of time similar problems surface again and again. Reflecting on this raises the question of my own behavioral patterns (are there triggers for certain reflexes and corresponding behaviors?). A change of perspective can again help me evaluate the appropriateness of my behavior.

One of our clients has regularly questioned the authority of her superiors. This, in turn, has repeatedly led to conflicts and therefore to separations. In our coaching this issue was put forward, which helped to create the way for a new behavioral perspective.

### 4. Basis of self-marketing

The next phase, after the career balance and reflection on one's own strengths and weaknesses, is the development of one's personal project: What should my next professional position look like? How and where can I best use my strengths for my new employer? In a change of perspective this means: which added value can my future employer expect from me? Right here a change of perspective is especially valuable. It helps me to better understand which activities and services of mine will add to the success of my potential employer in his present situation.

For our clients, the question of the added value for a new position is a central aspect of self-marketing. For a targeted position we sometimes, together with our clients, elaborate a project plan, with a budget. This provides tangible (economic) arguments for their engagement.

## 5. Finding the better job

In a job search, using a change of perspective, I learn to analyze job descriptions and to better compare them with my personal strengths. I will be most successful in a position where I can bring to fruit my strengths comprehensively. In turn, my new employer will pay me a higher salary if the required selection criteria are a strong match with my personal profile. It serves both parties, if the applicant anticipates the views and arguments of the employer, and can give appropriate answers in the interview.

## 6. Making the better job

In the process of integrating with the new position, and during the further development within the new organization a change of perspective can also be extremely helpful. It can help to better understand the expectations of the new work environment and to fulfill these even better, or to mold them into a new perspective. Here, the change of perspective is a social skill, which helps develop appropriate behavior in challenging situations, thereby enhancing the success of everyone involved, my colleagues and my own.

## 7. A change of perspective, in 6 steps:

- Step 1: You, as person A, imagine being your interlocutor, person B' (e.g. superior, recruiters, etc.)
- Step 2: As this person (B) ask yourself: what is important to me and what moves me?
- Step 3: As this person (B): what are the important aspects of this situation?
- Step 4: As this person (B): how does A behave?
- Step 5: As this person (B): Analyze the behavior of A and your own reaction as B to this behavior
- Step 6: Come back to being A, and reflect on what you can do better in the future to make this situation a success?

Together with a competent person (e.g. your coach) this process enables you to look at a specific situation from different perspectives, and thereby arrive at a new point of view.

## 8. How does the coach support this change of perspective?

The coach supports the outplacement client by initiating the change of perspective. Impulses for reflection are induced by the coach, by asking questions to find new perspectives, alternatives and solutions.

The questions should systematically follow the steps described in the sequence above. The coach will use open questions, circular questions, hypotheses, direct questions, questions about the motivation of the behavior, questions regarding the perception, and about the impact of personal communication modes, and questions about recurring patterns in professional situations.

It is important that the client really looks at the situation from various viewpoints, in order to come to new insights. Even Henry Ford came to the conclusion: "*If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view, and see things from that person's angle as well as from your own.*"

### Mark Richter

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Board Member of ACF Europe  
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WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN BERLIN  
AT THE ACF EUROPE CONFERENCE - APRIL 21 & 22



**ACF EUROPE  
CONFERENCE  
BERLIN  
21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>  
APRIL 2016**

Following our 'hold the date' request in December, we are confirming that this year's conference will be held in Berlin on Thursday evening 21<sup>st</sup> April and a full day 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

Our conference theme is 'Digital Transformation and the Career Transition Industry'.

We have three confirmed speakers, each published and expert in different elements of this topic.

We will be sending out more detail the first week of February.

In the meantime please email Giedie Bierens at [acfeurope@gmail.com](mailto:acfeurope@gmail.com) to indicate your interest to participate. This will help us to get an idea about the number of hotel rooms required.

