



## Surprises and how to handle them positively

“Life is like a box of chocolates,...” says Forrest Gump. He means that we never quite know for sure what will happen and which flavor we get. Maybe that important meeting gets cancelled. Or: You are concentrating and a colleague needs your help – right now!

In my [“Change Leadership 4.0”](#) article, I mentioned what leaders need to do to prepare them for the 4.0 environment. Those were the bigger changes around us. This Thought-Trigger is more about the small, everyday changes and surprises that we have to deal with. Often thinking of them as distractions, disturbances or contradictions. They do not fit our day, the plan, the process.

The [Cynefin Framework by Dave Snowden](#) can be very helpful. We are not in complicated



worlds anymore – this world clearly classifies as a complex one with all the political, economic and natural complications and disasters. Which means, plans, process and structure will not be helpful. Neither will be the frustration of people that are thriving in stability. We need to be agile; probe, act and evaluate. Learn from the results, potentially see patterns and then foster those patterns that are supporting our purpose.

How can we gain the broad-mindedness – as a friend called it: the generosity - to grow out of the black/white either-or thinking to a more grey as-well-as mindset? Three ideas for you to do more than just acknowledge the surprise as such:

- 1) **Think positive:** Don't get annoyed and look at the silver lining. Concentrate on identifying something positive about the disruption and it will be easier to handle.
- 2) **Use more “And”s:** As I state in my [Drop the But – use And](#) article, using “and” makes us think more solution-focused, holistically, and expansively.
- 3) **Experiment with perspectives:** Take the side of the disturbance by e.g., walk in the shoes of the competition breaking the normal way of doing business with their new service model? How happy does your Mother-in-Law feel when she announces she is staying for the holidays? Be the digitalization versus “only” dealing with the fall-out.

Remember these three points and I bet you will discover new ways to design solutions, influence the culture and sustain a healthier you through the world of today.

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