

addition to arriving at work around six every morning, four hours before the restaurant opens, she can manage every workstation. Moreover, she states in her interview that she really enjoys to work at the register, talking to the customers, asking about their day and so on.

“I would say that my biggest critique is myself. I have had bosses that never work on the lines in the kitchen. I think that is a bad thing. As an employee I want my manager to take part in the work.”

Store manager – A fast food restaurant

This mentality towards her job has made the employees admire her, gazing upon her as the perfect role model. Praising her ways of conducting work, even when that method consists of hanging around their shoulders physically showing and telling them what to do. Perhaps, something that the average employee normally would despise.

“My boss is the reason why I have worked here for so long. We have so much fun at work. We laugh and enjoy ourselves. Of course, we have to clean and go through the to-do-list, however, we do it while we are having a good time. She has become more of a friend than a boss. We eat lunch outside of work on occasion. It’s nice. She is very good at creating a positive work environment.”

Part-time employee – A fast food restaurant

The full-time employee totally agrees with her colleague:

“My boss is as perfect role-model. She is good at showing: “If you look at how I’m doing it now or if you do this, then it will go way faster”. I often think that her recommendations are clever and I try to remember them. If I do remember, she says: “Oh, that was smart, now you know it”.

Full-time employee – A fast food restaurant

During these interviews we witnessed perhaps the highest level of control and supervision of any of the interviewed managers. However, the employees adore their manager. When given the chance to present to us what they would have done differently if they were managers, everyone answered “nothing”.

4.7.3 A children’s clothing store

Being responsible for seventeen employees, all female, some full-time and some part-time employees a whole lot of effort and focus is placed on social modelling by the manager of the children clothing store. With the store being located in one of the busiest malls in downtown Oslo with customers constantly coming and

going the amount of stress and pressure could break down even the most experienced retail worker. The brilliant solution the manager has implemented to break the tension is to physically acknowledge every worker every single time they come or leave work. This is something all the employees have been ecstatic about during over interviews. They look forward going to work and sometimes refusing to leave.

“We have a very good work environment, even though we are 17 girls working together. We give each other hugs when arriving and leaving work. At first, new employees think it is weird to hug each other every day. Sometimes even a bit disgusting. Anyhow, they get used to it. When a person is finished for the day and gives a hug to the other employees, even the customers notice. When I left the store for this interview, I gave two hugs. One of the customers said: “Wow, what a fantastic atmosphere you guys have at work”. There are not many others stores where the employees are hugging each other”

Store manager – A children’s clothing store

The manager told us that two of the girls that previously have worked in other large companies feel very comfortable at the children’s clothing store in contrast to their last employer. Because they feel safe, they are looking forward to going to work. The store manager further elaborated:

“If there are any struggles at home, illness or other challenges, then the workplace should be a sanctuary where you feel safe. You spend most of your life at work. If you don’t enjoy your work, you should find something else to do. I have worked in this company for 6 years now, and after a twelve or thirteen hours long workday, I still want to go to work the day after.”

Store manager – A children’s clothing store

The assistant store manager confirms the positive work environment and talks very highly about her boss. She told us that all the girls like and respect the manager. Moreover, the manager never lets a bad day influence her mood. She is always smiling and according to her employees you can talk to her about everything.

“I think a lot of our stores success can be attributed to the positive atmosphere at work. I really enjoy working here and we have a lot of fun together. I also believe my boss is a huge part of our good results. She can be perceived as strict. However, she is always fair and we really enjoy each other’s company. I think that is why our team is so good. We support each other and we motivate each other. The best days are those my boss and I work together, then we are invincible”.

Assistant store manager – A children’s clothing store

Besides ensuring physical safety and comfort for her employees the manager is well aware of the importance of acknowledging the effort her employees put in their day-to-day activities. Never shying away from letting the employees know that their effort is appreciated. Even when an employee is not a work but facing any strenuous task in their life e.g. an exam at school. This has led to the employees taking responsibility themselves and increasing the will to succeed, leaving the amount of sick leave close to zero.

“I have a good dialogue with the girls. We talk a lot with each other. When I open the store in perfect condition, it only costs me 30 seconds to send a text message telling that it was nice to open a clean and neat store. If a student sits at school and struggles with an exam while getting that message, it can make her day. In addition, it probably makes her wanting to leave the store in the same condition the next time she closes. During my six years as a store manager I have only got two sick leaves. Our absence because of illness is close to zero. It has to be a result of people enjoying their work. It has to be the main reason.”

Store manager – A children’s clothing store

The manager in the children’s clothing store is no different than her examined peers when it comes to being a role model for her employees and getting her hands dirty everyday. Spending hours preparing the store before opening hours and always aiming for that extra sale showing her employees how to properly handle the role as a salesman.

“You have to be a role model. You have to try getting additional sales on every customer. If you think that the customer is pleased with only one item and let them leave the store. Why should my girls try to sell extra items then, when the store manager fails in trying? Originally, my workday starts at 9.00. However, I come to work 7.00 every day. That is something I have chosen by myself. The head office has told me many times that I don’t have to be at work before 9.00. Nonetheless, I’m a person who likes to start the day at 7.00, filling up the shelves and getting ready for a new day.

Store manager – A children’s clothing store

Moreover, the manager strongly believes that if she does not show her employees that she is willing to go that extra distance and sacrifices her spare-time, why would the employees do it?

I don’t want to show my weak side when at work. If I have a difficult customer or are in a hurry, I always have to make time. Yes, I might miss

my train. Because, I don't want to show the girls that it is acceptable to interrupt in a middle of a sale. You have to show that it is okay to miss a train. If the customer is experiencing great service, then I can't interrupt the sale and let one of the other girls take over. The customer would probably leave more money in our store if I close the sale myself."

Store manager – A children's clothing store

There is no doubt that the employees' like their manager. Both the assistant store manager and the full-time employee talked a lot about how much they respected her. Equivalently to the previous stores the employees admire and aspire to be like their manager.

"...She runs the best store in the whole chain, worldwide. Of course, I want to be as good as she is. I really do".

Full-time employee – A children's clothing store

"I look up to my boss. She is the one teaching me new stuff. She has won a lot of awards, and is only one year older than me. It is very motivating to see everything that she has achieved.

Assistant store manager – A children's clothing store

The popularity of the store manager was confirmed numerous times by her employees, hoping that she never leaves for another job. The full-time employee said the managers' passion for her job shines through her and is being passed on to others. At work, the full-time employee always want to perform her best, hoping that the same passion will be transferred on to her subordinates.

"I hope she never quits her job. It would turn my everyday upside down. She makes me want to succeed at work. I don't know how she's doing it. However, she often praises good effort. She is good at teaching me new stuff. She has full control, something I also want to have. I want to walk in her shoes."

Full-time employee – A children's clothing store

4.7.4 Summary

All the investigated managers truly care for their employees, wanting them to enjoy their work, grow both personally and professionally while grasping responsibility. The manager at the fast food restaurant is practically treating her employees like if they were her own children. Her husband has to remind her to not engage too deeply in the employee's personal life. However, the manager struggles to comply with his recommendations. The interviews in the children's clothing store unveiled that it is not only the manager who care for her employees, the employees deeply like and respect her as well. Both the female store managers

commit hundred percent in creating and maintaining a safe and positive work environment. We did not detect the same motherly devotion at the high-end fashion store. However, it was evident that they also have a great work environment, with the two owners being called father and father by their employees and the entire sales team view themselves as the “(store name) family.”

We identified a lot of empirical evidence showing how all the managers are great role models to their employees. They are hard working, highly skilled and their love for their jobs shine right through them. The employees look up to their managers, and more than one told us that they want to be like their manager, which we believe is one of the best compliments a manager can receive. We can think of no immediate danger in the way our cases carry out social modelling and caregiving. An imaginable challenge could perhaps be how to perform tough leadership and make arduous decisions when the managers and the employees look upon each other as friends. However, this research has rejected that potential threat in the three investigated cases, without disproving that others can experience this problem.

We believe the category of social modelling and caregiving consists of the most central practices in enabling our cases’ massive success. By making the employees feel safe and appreciated, this category emerges as a contingency in carrying out successful micromanagement. The manager’s high demand, direct feedback and nit-picking behaviour is probably easier to digest with their caregiving attitude and exemplar behaviour.

Part V: Discussion

5.1 Linking back to theory

As presented above, we have identified six different categories containing of several coherent practices, all of them backed up by empirical evidence. Our three cases are all high performers chosen with assistance from Steen & Strøm. In a highly competitive industry all of them have delivered outstanding results over long periods of time. With the exception of the sixth and final category, “social modelling and caregiving”, all the categories consists of micro-managerial practices commonly described as destructive behaviour and dark side personality traits in the leadership literature (Chambers 2004, 14; Knight 2015; White 2010; Wright 2000; Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003; Hogan, Hogan and Kaiser 2010; Amabile et al. 2004; Sidhu 2012).

Equivalently to Holtz and Harold (2013, 509) we believe that there is a need for a certain level of balance when it comes to structure and micromanagement. They state there is a curvilinear relationship between structure and counterproductive work behaviour. Similarly, Raveendhran and Wakslak (2014), state that dominative and constant micro-managerial behaviour makes the manager show a lack of leadership skill. Both implying that too little or too much of one thing leads to counter-productiveness. This is where we believe that our managers excel. They are excellent at knowing when and where to micromanage and when and where to behave in a caring and supportive manner. This corresponds to what Bouchard (2009) calls a “Reactive Micromanager”, a leader whom enforces micromanagement when it is deemed necessary. Furthermore, it parallels what Amabile defines as effective leadership (2004, 27). She states that effective leadership requires skill not only in managing both subordinate tasks and subordinate relationships, but also in integrating the two simultaneously. This supports our previous claim concerning the importance of harmonizing your leadership behavior.

These managers constantly use leadership techniques equivalent to micromanagement while being among the utmost successful in the country and in one instance the entire continent. How could this possibly be the case if their behaviour is full of theoretical red flags commonly known as malpractices? This

thesis champion that micromanagement is no sickness or guarantee of derailment. On the contrary, we state that it is a managerial tool that can be highly effective when used properly in a fitting climate. In the following section, we will discuss our cases use of micromanagement and the impact of this leadership behaviour.

According to the reviewed literature on micromanagement, being highly detail oriented, keeping close attention to the employees and how they perform their work are some of the main characteristics of its very existence (Knight 2015; White 2010; Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003; Sidhu 2012; Raveendhran and Wakslak 2014). Planning work down to the smallest detail is one of the more extreme aspects of micromanagement (Sidhu 2012), a practice we have witnessed numerous times in our three cases. Moreover, the managers in the examined stores put a profuse amount of focus on surveillance and testing. Consequently showing us several traits of micromanagement by portraying an innate need of supervision, tracking time of employees, close scrutiny, control and second-guessing their employees by testing them (Wright 2000, 362; White 2010; Sidhu 2012). We believe it is safe to claim that the managers in our cases can be characterized as micromanagers.

White (2010, 72) states that it is possible to be a good manager while exercising a certain degree of micromanagement. However, he is highly sceptical towards the concept. According to Hogan, Hogan and Kaiser (2010, 566), after receiving the label micromanager, the road to derailment is short. Wright (2000) accuse micromanagers to over-focus at the mean rather than aiming their attention towards the results. After having investigated our three cases, we experienced the opposite. We observed that the manager's close attention towards their employees and their scrutinizing obsession with details was deliberately being used to enhance the results.

Instead of crashing and burning, the leaders in our cases are performing at the top of their class, year after year. Similarly to the managers in the successful 10X companies (Collins and Hansen 2011), these managers are obsessed with details and show a certain degree of paranoia when it comes to their businesses. Collins and Hansen (2011) found three common denominators within the 10X companies, fanatic discipline, empirical creativity and productive paranoia. All three of them

resemble several of the practices we identified in our cases. The manager at the fast food restaurant and children's clothing store show fanatic discipline when arriving hours before opening in order to make their store ready for the day. Moreover, the manager at the fast food restaurant displays fanatic discipline when they never run out of commodities. Also, the high-end fashion store showcases a fanatic discipline by having meetings every Monday and Tuesday and planning activities and campaigns months in advance. Furthermore, all our three cases practice fanatic discipline when maintaining total control of their inventory.

Empirical creativity lets the 10X companies succeed when making bold and creative moves (Collins and Hansen 2011). All three of our cases plan their activities and campaigns on historical numbers and experiences. The manager at the children's clothing store was called crazy by her superior and peers when she ordered six boxes of shirts right after the 17th of May. However, she showed empirical creativity by planning for Eid, a celebration the industry traditionally does not take into account. Another example is her active use of Oslo Spectrum's calendar when planning the timesheets. All three cases display empirical creativity when basing their purchase decisions and supplementary orders on an always up-to-date inventory combined with historical numbers. Displaying a contrast to many actors in the industry that has been known for mainly using their "gut" feeling.

The third common denominator within the 10X companies is productive paranoia, the managers have an innate need keeping their companies constantly on toe (Collins and Hansen 2011). Even though the means is not exactly the same, all our cases use testing to keep their employees sharp. This practice displays paranoia and facilitates productivity. The high-end fashion store shows productive paranoia when using all the quiet periods of the year to plan and prepare for the next peak. Moreover, all our three cases demonstrate productive paranoia through their practices of meticulous planning, execution and follow-up.

As presented in the discussing above, the disciplined leadership described by Collins and Hanson (2011) in the 10X companies is closely linked to the micro-managerial behaviour in our three case. Another leadership behaviour with clear similarities to our cases is what Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe (2008, 667) call

instructional leadership. In their research, schools that performed above average were more likely to be involved in planning, follow-up and reviewing of the students work (2008, 667). These practices are strikingly akin to the category of meticulous planning, execution and follow-up, all key practices in our cases. It is tempting to compare the relationships between principal, teachers and students in instructional leadership to the relationship between store managers, employees and the customers in our cases. To display effective instructional leadership the principals must be proficient about their jobs, knowing how to utilize this competence and to combine these two aforementioned skills in building relational trust (2008, 667).

All the managers in our cases have proved to be highly knowledgeable and skilled in running their businesses. Their results point towards the fact that they also know how to utilize this knowledge. The manager at the children's clothing store for instance has been handpicked to travel around to other stores sharing her valuable knowledge and practices. However, she has also turned down the offer to do this full-time at several occasions as a result of enjoying her present job too much. Through the practices of social modelling and caregiving, the managers in our cases additionally display that they are able to create relational trust. Thus, we can see that the managers in our cases and their micro-managerial practices are closely related to what Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe define as effective instructional leadership (2008, 667).

In their research, Blase and Blase (1999) found that talking to teachers to promote reflection, in addition to facilitating personal growth was the two most important factors in enhancing effective instructional leadership. Both these practices are evident in our cases. The close follow-up and instant feedback are practices implemented to create a better understanding of the work. Hopefully, leading to reflection and both personal and professional growth. Promoting personal growth is also enhanced in our cases through the practises of comprehensive training and never-ending learning, where the managers cheer and push their employees to become the best possible version of themselves.

For a leader to be able to manage their subordinates, she or he has to bear a particular level of insight on the employees' skill level. This would be impossible

without a certain level of supervision (Liao and Chun 2015, 4). Through the practices of surveillance and testing our examined leaders constantly obtain information about their employees and their behaviour at work, enabling facilitation of development and learning. It is viable to claim that without this level of surveillance and testing it is also arduous for the employees to showcase their skillsets, as portrayed by the female department manager at the high-end fashion store. Furthermore, this strict regime of surveillance and testing has helped the employees to stay sharp and to always perform at their best. On the other hand, surveillance and testing can undermine the trust employees' feel they deserve. In our cases, the managers treat this potential pitfall by among other things focusing on knowledge and information sharing, delegating responsibilities and two-way feedback, practices Dutton states create trust (2003b).

What the literature calls interactional monitoring is closely related to the practice of meticulous follow-up. Interactional monitoring, like meticulous follow-up, contains of gathering employees' opinion, feedback and expectation about their work environment. Acting in such a manner could further assist collaboration and transparency between management and their subordinates on what is currently working and what needs alteration (Liao and Chun 2015). This is evidently the situation in our cases, where many of the employees not only have picked up the practices from their managers, however their mind-set on several important matters as well.

As apparent in the Amabile et al. article, there was two micromanagers where one was complained and the other cherished for his work (2004). Both of them had numerous micro-managerial traits in their way of conducting their work. Including and not limited to monitoring progress and regularly providing guidance to their subordinates. However, as previously stated, the skills of the successful manager allowed him to do so in a much more relationship-enhancing fashion (Amabile et al. 2004, 27). As evident in our examined cases, we believe that the successful manager was applauded because of his ability to combine micromanagement with an immense focus on social interactions. He reacted to problems with willingness to help and he praised good work both in private and in public (Amabile et al. 2004, 17-20). Similar to our managers who never lets a chance of appraisal get away from them. Whether it is by a short text message, letting them know in a

meeting or instantly physically acknowledging their achievements they never shy away from potential caregiving and social modelling. We claim that this is one of many reasons why the examined managers gets away with micromanagement and continuously are being successful. Or as Amabile et al. puts it, “effective leadership requires skill not only in managing both subordinate tasks and subordinate relationships, but also in integrating the two simultaneously” (2004, 27).

Just as Mike Faith, the CEO and founder of Headsets.com states in Knights article (2015); our cases demonstrate through the practice of thorough training that micromanagement can be used favourably in training. Initially, the employees are in a tight grip with the managers closely monitoring their every move. Eventually, during quieter days, employees are given the chance to try assignments they do not excel in. Finally, when the employees are deemed ready to act on their own they are given every opportunity to do so. Throughout the training, our managers act explicit with their expectations to employees, similar to what Mike Faith recommends (2015). Further, Holtz and Harold emphasize that by establishing clear roles, assignments and goals companies can reduce sloppiness, carelessness, negligence and other lackadaisical work behaviours (2013, 494-497), all practices that we identified in our cases.

Rebecca Knight states that by micromanaging a team one can reduce the teams’ moral, create mistrust and limit the team’s capability to grow (2015). However, in our cases the managers use micromanagement to achieve the exact opposite. The amount of effort and focus these managers put on training, details, testing and so forth they answer with at least the same amount of focus on social modelling and caregiving, resembling what theory labels high quality connections (Dutton and Heaphy 2003; Stephens, Heaphy and Dutton 2011; Dutton 2003a; Carmeli, Dutton and Hardin 2015; Turner, Dutton and Ragins 2008; Dutton 2003b). These practices include physically acknowledging everyone at work as more than just employees, immersing in respectful engagement, conveying presence and being perceived as genuine. In all of our cases the employees and managers view themselves as friends or “family”. Thus, as previously stated making the job a sanctuary where one can lay all of ones troubles to rest.

We believe that without Social Modelling and Caregiving, the behaviour of the examined managers could be portrayed as destructive in a long-term perspective. Possibly wearing out the employees and resulting in increasing turnover. This description fits the classical view of micromanagement, a view we try to challenge in this thesis. We believe that micromanagers who derails often fail in establishing high-quality connections and are depraving the employee's energy through corrosive connections (Dutton 2003b, 8-10). However, with an immense focus on the individual behind the employee, the managers in our investigated cases have successfully created an environment where they can set and stipulate their high demands without being portrayed as controlling and overpowering. Behaviour that is creating high-quality connections and boosting the employee's positive energy. These positive interactions are not only contagious among the employees, they also rubs on to the customers and other external parties. This renewable energy helps make the teams and stores extraordinary (Dutton 2003b, 11-15).

In the discussion above, one can clearly see the similarities between the micromanagers in our cases and several positive leadership behaviours in the literature, backing up our claim that micromanagement can be conducted prosperously. We believe there are many successful managers "out there" practicing micromanagement, who are wrongfully not being placed under that label. Further, we suspect a lot of the critique towards micromanagement often is due to an overuse of its practices. An all-in or nothing mentality. In our cases, we have seen that these successful micromanagers also provide responsibilities, freedom and a lot of care. These managers loosen their tight grip when the environment or task is suitable, tightening it up again when necessary. For example, when it comes to new employees, peak seasons, massive campaigns and other highly value-adding activities.

We consider the six identified categories and the corresponding practices to be highly interdependent. Without comprehensive training, meticulous follow-up, social modelling and caregiving, the rigorous attention to details and external appearance would presumably not be carried out as successful as shown in our cases. However, by finding the right balance between micromanagement, social modelling and caregiving, we propose that others can harvest the same advantages when applying these practices as our three cases have. However, failing to balance

the level of micromanagement, the risk of irritating the employees, depriving their autonomy and innovative ideas is present. Possibly ending up as the least successful leader Amabile et al. investigated, who made highly experienced team members feel over-controlled, frustrated and thus reducing the teams' effectiveness (2004).

5.2 Theoretical contribution to the leadership literature

This master thesis adds a new dimension to the present leadership literature. Current leadership literature almost exclusively portrays micromanagement as unpropitious and destructive (*Chambers 2004, 14; Knight 2015; White 2010; Wright 2000; Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003; Hogan, Hogan and Kaiser 2010; Amabile et al. 2004; Sidhu 2012*). Whereas our findings champion that some of the highest performing and awarded managers in the retail industry are indeed micromanagers. Their practices are painstakingly meticulous and borderline obsessive. Ranging from supervising and monitoring their employees to rigorously testing and commanding their employees. The managers' leadership style has several commonalities with so-called malpractice and micromanagement.

Moreover, by thoroughly excavating the term micromanager we have been able to add further substance to the term, exploring numerous uncharted territories revealing new unascertained discoveries regarding this bedevilled phenomenon. Where current leadership theory has leapfrogged the advantageous sides of the term, we have reaped its prosperity fulfilling its inherent potential. We have showed that its latent abilities have to be buoyed by other factors to truly flourish, explicitly by social modelling and caregiving. Additionally, we have presented, compared and adduced similarities between micromanagement and other acclaimed theoretical terms. Divulging distinct coinciding facets amongst them exhibiting that the road from malpractice to prosperity is shorter than one might imagine.

Even though current research and our research may imply that they can be deemed controlling and zealous, there is no denying the results these acclaimed managers have to show for as the forerunners of the industry. Undeniably, the negativity

surrounding micromanagement is far away from being debunked. However, we believe that this thesis advocates a change in how micromanagement should be perceived. Future research ought to be more open-minded about micromanagement as a tool for ensuring productivity and results instead of a malpractice.

5.3 Limitations and future research

The intention of our research was to present our perception of the term micromanager by excavating some of the highest performing stores and renowned managers in the retail industry. Indubitably, a noteworthy limitation of this research is that it solely consists of interviews. To observe and witness these managerial traits would have been beneficiary for the strength of the research. However, due to time constraints and our lack of experience within the field this research methodology was not an option for this thesis. Additionally, a second limitation is the number and types of cases. The retail industry is vast and multifarious, given that our research is confined to three cases we are unquestionably far away from covering the entire industry. Thus, the generalizability of the research is weakened.

Furthermore, the number of interviewees in the research is considered a vulnerability regarding our findings. Limited to only nine interviewees the strength of the research would be stronger if this number was greater. In addition, it would be preferable to interview customers and former employees as well to ensure objectivity and impartiality across several fields of the customer base and workforce. Another limitation is that out of our nine interviewees only two were male. Perhaps the results would differ if the conglomeration of sexes were more proportionate.

Moreover, this research solely contains of managers working in the retail industry. It is feasible that our findings would be inconsistent in a research covering numerous different industries. Finally, the research was mostly conducted on managers in small companies, perhaps on a level where nit-picking details is important. How would this behaviour be tolerated in higher levels of management in larger companies with multiple levels of management? Therefore, future

research should observe and interview a greater and more diverse number of workers and managers ensuring a larger sample size and thus a stronger research.

5.4 Practical implications

The retail industry is large part of Norway's economy employing thousands of workers across our elongated coastline and mountainous landscape often with a turnover rate similar to that of a revolving door. Given the short tenure, part-time positions and young age of the employees using a micro-managerial approach towards the employees can be advantageous. However, the managers have to find a certain delicate balance when it comes to this authoritative leadership style. Too much of same thing over a long period of time can become tedious for the employees. Therefore, we believe that our last category "Social Modelling and Caregiving" is indispensable for the success of our managers. What they show us in territorial and governing behaviour they answer us with the same grandiose heedfulness towards their employee's need of recognition and prosperity.

Managers across the world are terrified to be labelled a micromanager. This can be considered natural considering that people are born with an innate fear of being disliked and rejected (Smith 2013). However, our research implies that managers perhaps should not be afraid to speak their mind, take control and administer assignments to their employees. As long as they find it reasonable and courteous, the employees do not mind being delegated. In fact, they seem to prefer it. Thus, the practical implication taken form our research is that one should not be reluctant and apprehensive with implementing a frank and authoritarian approach to one's leadership style.

5.5 Conclusion

We initiated this master thesis with the aim to research and show that micromanagement is not a one sided evil as it almost entirely is labelled by the leadership literature. Our goal was not to turn the term micromanager into an exclusively positive phenomenon. However, we wanted to display that positive aspects within the concept exists. Three highly successful managers and their teams has been interviewed, giving us exciting and valuable insight into their way

of managing and running their business. We identified several common practices across the three cases, sorting them into the six categories; *rigorous attention to details and external appearance, meticulous planning, execution and follow-up, strict financial and logistical control, surveillance and testing, thorough training and never-ending learning and social modelling and caregiving*. With the exception of social modelling and caregiving, all the others categories contain several practices which commonly are labelled as micromanagement. Consequently, we deem it fitting to name all the investigated leaders micromanagers. With their massive success in mind, we bravely state that this thesis shows another side of micromanagement, one that is not solely negative. In fact, it can be quite effective.

Moreover, we want to empathize the importance of maintaining a certain balance when engaging in micromanagement, in addition to knowledge of when to use it, and where to grant freedom and autonomy. Great attention to detail, close presence and constant feedback needs the same level of focus on creating energy through high-quality connections enabling a positive work environment, which in this thesis is shown through social modelling and caregiving. Further, we consider the six identified categories to be deeply interdependent, where the great success our cases experience is due to a synergy of these practices.

Finally, we want to suggest looking at micromanagement as a tool in a leader's repertoire and not as a perpetual leadership behaviour. Does any manager succeed with constantly behaving in the same way independent of the situation and the persons involved? The answer to that question is of course no. Given that our research was only conducting in cases situated in the retail industry and in shopping malls, it is ambitious and perchance foolish to claim that this behaviour would ensure prosperity in any given work environment. Nonetheless, possibly the time has come to abolish the negativity surrounding micromanagement and embrace it for what it truly is if done correctly, an efficient way of ensuring prosperity. Perhaps, the time is ripe to eradicate micromanagement as a malpractice and let it further be forever known as mall practice.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. The interview guide

Phase	Questions/agenda	Purpose
#1 Initiation and warm up (10 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Presenting purpose of study • Permission to record • Informed consent • <i>“Kan du tenke deg å starte med å fortelle litt om deg selv?”</i> • <i>“Hva er din rolle og dine ansvarsområder?”</i> • <i>“Hvor lenge har du jobbet hos ...?”</i> 	Creating an informal atmosphere where the interviewee can become comfortable
#2 Eliciting extended storytelling (20 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Kan du beskrive en vanlig dag på jobb?”</i> • <i>“Hva med en vanlig uke?”</i> • <i>“Vil du fortelle om en kampanje/aktivitet som fungerte spesielt bra?”</i> • <i>“Hvor store er forskjellen mellom hverdag og store kampanjer?”</i> 	Getting stores for the daily activities Getting stories of success
#3 Directed questions, comparative (20 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Hvorfor tror du at deres butikk opplever suksess?”</i> • <i>“Hvis du kunne endret hvordan butikken drives i dag, hva ville du gjort?”</i> • <i>“Hvor viktig er planlegging for deres hverdag?”</i> • <i>“Til hvilken grad fokuseres det på gjennomføring og oppfølging av oppgaver?”</i> • <i>“Hvor aktiv er nærmeste leder i din arbeidshverdag?”</i> • <i>“Hvor mye opplæring matte en ny person som skulle overtatt din posisjon/oppgaver hatt?”</i> • <i>“Basert på det du sier og andre erfaringer kan det virke som butikkens suksess har noe med hvordan de ansatte følges opp. Hva tenker du?”</i> 	Looking for the use of micromanagement
#4 Closure and sharing (10 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recap the findings • Have we understood you correctly? • Is it anything you would like to add? 	

Appendix 2. Empirical evidence not presented in the findings

Category 1. Rigorous attention to Detail and External Appearance

<p>Extreme focus on external appearance, creating an appealing and inspiring store. When aspiring to maintain a perfect store, maintenance is a vital part of the daily duties.</p>		<p>Rigorous attention to detail in order to achieve perfection. The methods are pre-determined and often iterative at hourly, daily and weekly basis.</p>		<p>A high-end fashion store</p>	
	<p>“When colleagues stand with their arms crossed in the front, I go and poke them. It doesn't look good. I think it's very important to be smiling and welcoming. You can't look like you hate your job. Be social and say hi to every customer. Here at this mall a lot of people are crossing through our restaurant. We have to say hi to them as well, instead of being frustrated because they are just passing through”.</p> <p>Part-time employee</p>	<p>A fast food restaurant</p>		<p>A children clothing store</p>	

Category 2. Meticulous Planning, Execution and Follow-up

<p>Thorough planning and preparation in order to perform a high level of service and results</p>	<p>A high-end fashion store</p>	<p>A fast food restaurant</p>	<p>A children clothing store</p>
<p>Use of "to-do-lists" to ensure execution of the tasks at hand</p>			
<p>Follow-up to secure completion of tasks and potential learning of wrong doings</p>			<p><i>"I have 2 annual performance appraisals with each employee. I'm a huge fan of performance appraisals. However, the 2 annual times is not enough. If you have an issue, you can't wait 3 months to handle it. You have to be hands on and handle it straight away".</i></p> <p>Store manager</p>

Category 3. Strict Financial and Logistical control

	<p>A high-end fashion store</p>	<p>A fast food restaurant</p>	<p>A children clothing store</p>
<p>Strict financial and logistical supervision to maintain a high level of control of the store performance and inventory status</p>	<p><i>“Every Tuesday we have a meeting with the store managers. Here we check KPI figures, budgets, numbers, turnover rates etc. A lot of other store managers don’t even know how to calculate basic numbers. I believe that we stand out in that regard”.</i></p> <p>Owner</p> <p><i>“I’m responsible for the logistics here at the company. We have switched into a more advanced pricing system during the past two years, a RFID driven system”.</i></p> <p>Male department manager</p>		

Category 4. Surveillance and Testing

<p>Surveillance is actively used to ensure desired behavior. Employees are tested on a regular basis to maintain a high level of knowledge and perfect execution of tasks. The uncertainty regarding timing of the tests keep employees at their feet at all times.</p>	<p>A high-end fashion store</p>	<p>A fast food restaurant</p> <p><i>Every six months the employees have to fill at a form, where they check out boxes that they have been tested in every workstation. Whether it's the register, inventory, french fries, kitchen duty, whatever.</i></p> <p>Store manager</p>	<p>A children clothing store</p>
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Category 5. Comprehensive Training and never-ending Learning

Training is a vital part of making the new employees fit into a high performing environment. The training never stops. New techniques are acquired when new products are introduced. Everyone can raise their own level.	<p>A high-end fashion store</p> <p>"... It depends a little on the employee. But most of the time they are able to find good and creative solutions when merchandising. Therefore, I let them do it how they prefer, however I'm quick to share my opinion if something doesn't work".</p> <p>Owner</p> <p>"There's one employee who is responsible for the brand "Bread & Boxers" and it is critical that she gets the training she needs regarding that brand. So that she know how to reorder, how to work with the supplier, log onto their websites, how much to order at what times, so that there isn't too much or too little of it in our store. So I go thru all of this the first times with her so that she feels safe doing it herself. However, I'm always there, so she is not completely alone either so that she shouldn't be afraid to ask for help. I try to teach her a lot of the information behind the brand, however it's also her responsibility to gather knowledge on her own. The employees like that, they gain ownership of the brand, they read up on the brand when they're home and I can see when they get responsibilities like that, that they really grow as employees, right?"</p> <p>Female department manager</p>	<p>A fast food restaurant</p> <p>"It is very important that the new ones who come in are not only put on dish washing or cleaning duty, even though it's very helpful for us. They need to learn how to prepare the burger, work the register and so on, quickly".</p> <p>Store manager</p> <p>"To be a shift leader, you have to attend a special training program. You have to go through a huge folder, which can take up to a couple of months. The training consists of new things and tests every day".</p> <p>Part-time employee</p> <p>"It's not only our boss who is strict. We are good at having high expectations to each other as well. Pushing everyone to performing their best. It's a part of our culture".</p> <p>Full-time employee</p> <p>"I experienced that people were too prepared for interviews and that they were a totally different person than whom they portrayed them to be. Therefore, I started doing group interview with upwards to forty people at a time. It's easier to notice who has a drive, who wants the job and how they interact with other people. I can identify red flags right way. Some are on their cell phone etc".</p> <p>Store manager</p>	<p>A children clothing store</p> <p>"Not long ago, we had a course in merchandising on how to build a specific kind of table. We have a type of table that consists of one large and one smaller part, which is integrated into each other. We learned to use maximum four different colors and that both tables have to harmonize. They are to be looked upon as one unit".</p> <p>Assistant store manager</p> <p>"There are 5 collections each year. Every time a large delivery is dropped in the store, we have a staff meeting, going through all the relevant product knowledge. This makes the girls feel confident. They give recommendations on how to wash the cloths and share their knowledge about the products with the customers. If a customer's make a warranty claim, then you can say: "Have you remembered to not use any softener?". I that way, it is easier to reject false claims. Because our rules are so clear and everybody has the same product knowledge, you can tell a customer who claims they didn't get the right washing instructions, that they actually did. Because everybody got the same training, and everyone attended the same staff meeting".</p> <p>Store manager</p>
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<p>Knowledge and information sharing are crucial in ensuring that the employees have a high level of product knowledge.</p>	<p><i>"Hierarchy is not an important thing in our company. We want the information to be shared and reach the outer parts of the company, our part-timers".</i></p> <p>Owner</p>	<p><i>"The new employees have to work at the kitchen for two months to master it. We get an e-mail and additional training every time a new burger is introduced. We have to learn how to make the new burger and which ingredients to use. This is important both in the kitchen and to be able to sell a lot of the new burger".</i></p> <p>Full-time employee</p>	<p><i>"I have got a really thorough training on all the routines and practices in the store. How things should be cleaned. How to build wall and table exhibitions. To give feedback while I'm working with my colleagues and how to do it and so on".</i></p> <p>Full-time employee</p> <p><i>"When we get a main delivery, we often make videos and post on our intranet, explaining the product features. Especially with rainwear and other types of technical clothing. Then the girls can look at the video at home as many times they want and get familiar with the new knowledge".</i></p> <p>Store manager</p> <p><i>"The girls say I always have new ways to satisfy customer needs. I love it when a customer thanks you for good service. That is why I enjoy so much working at the floor. I have been given the opportunity of a desk job many times, but where is the fun in that? Now, with my new position I'm supposed to do some office work. However, I want serve the customers when at work, delivering outstanding customer service. Instead, I can take a couple of hours with my laptop in the couch".</i></p> <p>Store manager</p> <p><i>"We get a lot of relevant information through our intranet. Each week, a newsletter is sent out with information regarding activities the current week. In addition, we get updated on last week sales, who sold the most, who had the best sale etc. There are both information and motivation".</i></p> <p>Full-time employee</p>
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<p>The managers are facilitating development and give the employees opportunities to grow and evolve.</p>		<p><i>"At the moment, I'm a service associate, which is the starting level. However, it's a lot of possibilities for development at work. We have a lot of opportunities".</i></p> <p>Full-time employee</p>	<p><i>"If you're seventeen and talented and want to become a shift manager, we give them every opportunity to become so. We help them with all the necessary formal testing and so forth".</i></p> <p>Store manager</p>
		<p><i>"We have a group at facebook which we use as an intranet. We post pictures of the walls and tables we have built. Items that are selling extraordinary well. Also items that have defects or lacks. It is a very easy and efficient way to share information".</i></p> <p>Store manager</p>	<p><i>"My employees need to know what the water resistance is, what the durability etc. To minimize the number of warranty claims, we must always explain that one shall not use waterproofing products or softener. This is things they just have to know and do".</i></p> <p>Store manager</p>
		<p><i>"I love my job and my boss. She runs the best store in the whole chain, worldwide. Of course, I want to be as good as she is. I really do. My mom has run her own business for 32 years. I have always imagined to be my own boss some day".</i></p> <p>Full-time employee</p>	

Category 6. Social Modelling and Caregiving

<p>The managers are extremely hard working. They begin their day hours before they are supposed to in order to prepare their daily activities. The employees admire them, wanting to learn from them, even aspire to be them. The managers urge to maintain a positive work environment and go beyond what is expected in making the employees enjoy their workplace.</p>	<p>A high-end fashion store</p>	<p>A fast food restaurant</p>	<p>A children clothing store</p>
		<p><i>I show up at work around six am. Then I open up the kitchen and activate every machine, prepare all the food and make everything ready for the rest of the day.</i></p> <p>Store manager</p> <p><i>Yes, I think it is really fun to work at the register, talk to the customers, hear about their day, and talk about the weather or whatever.</i></p> <p>Store manager</p>	<p><i>The country manager says that I always have at least one person in my stores that I take extra responsibility and care of, and these persons are staying with the firm for many years, becoming extremely valuable assets.</i></p> <p>Store manager</p> <p><i>Two of the girls who have worked in other large companies say they feel very comfortable working here. They say that they are looking forward going to work. Because, they feel safe at work.</i></p> <p>Store manager</p> <p><i>"My boss surly loves her job. She is super passionate, and it's passed over on to me. When I'm at work, I always do my best, hoping the dedication and spirit will transfer to my subordinates. I want to contribute into a positive work environment, where people work hard together".</i></p> <p>Full-time employee</p> <p><i>When asked if her boss is a good role model, the assistant store manager answered: "Yes! Absolutely! Definitely! Always cheerful and positive, regardless of the situation".</i></p> <p>Full-time employee</p> <p><i>I think all the girls in our store like our boss and respect her a lot. She is not a person who'll let a bad day influence our mood. She is always smiling. You can talk to her about everything. She is very pleasant to deal with.</i></p> <p>Assistant store manager</p>

Appendix 3. The e-mail sent out to the managers` containing our findings

Igjen, tusen takk for at du tok deg tid til at vi fikk intervju deg og dine ansatte. Vi har fått utrolig mange spennende historier og har nå jobbet med å sortere de forskjellige praksisene.

Vi har som allerede nevnt intervjuet 3 ulike typer butikker, hvorav en er en restaurant. Alle går for å være blant de aller beste i sitt segment.

Oppgaven vi skriver handler om ledelse og et begrep vi kaller "micromanagement". Dette er en form for ledelse som betyr tett oppfølging, detaljstyring og mye tilstedeværelse med de ansatte. Micromanagement går for å være "fy-fy" i ledelse-litteraturen. Vi derimot tror at når man driver butikk er man totalt avhengig av å detaljstyre endel ting for å lykkes. Man må selvfølgelig ikke være en micromanager hele tiden, men heller tilpasse seg situasjon og person. Vi ble absolutt ikke overrasket over at alle intervjuene avdekket kjennetegn ved micromanagement.

Vi har kommet frem til 6 ulike praksiser som brukes på tvers av alle 3 butikker. Vi tror disse er mye av nøkkelen til deres suksess. Men igjen, hvem vet bedre hvorfor deres butikk opplever suksess enn sjefen sjøl. Hva tenker du om disse kategoriene? Høres det riktig ut? Hvilke er viktigst? Hva er de største utfordringene ved disse praksisene? Her er det stor takhøyde, så bare fyr løs!

Hvis det er noe annet du ønsker å legge til eller kommentere er du veldig velkommen til det!

Vi hadde satt utrolig stor pris på om du kunne tenke deg å bruke 10-30 min på å svare på denne mailen. Gjerne kommenter under hver kategori. Har du tid til å svare i løpet av mandag hadde det vært fantastisk, hvis ikke får vi også brukt svaret ditt om det kommer innen neste helg.

Da hele oppgaven skrives på engelsk har jeg valgt å beholde de originale navnene. Prøver å forklare kort under.

1: Rigorous Attention to Detail & External Appearance

Lederne kan mer eller mindre kategoriseres som perfektionister. De styrer f.eks hvordan butikken lukter, hvordan de ansatte går kledd eller hvordan ketchupen plasseres på burgeren. Ekstremt fokus på å holde butikken fin og inspirerende. Det skal alltid være rent og ryddig, alltid. For å klare dette er det en hel del daglige og ukentlige rutiner som må følges tett. Rutiner som lederne vet fungerer, og gjerne som de har laget/tilpasset selv

2: Meticulous Planning, Execution & Follow-up

Planlegging og forberedelser er svært sentrale aktiviteter. Det brukes masse tid og energi på dette. Lederne og i flere tilfeller også ansatte er ekstra tidlig ute på jobb for å forberede dagen. I en travel hverdag med mengder av ulike oppgaver er gjennomføring av alle oppgavene ekstremt viktig. For å holde kontroll brukes to-do-lister aktivt. Oppgavene skal ikke gå ut over butikkens utseende.

Oppgaver og ansatte følges tett opp. Dette gjøres gjennom tilstedeværelse, og gjerne over en kaffekopp. Tilbakemeldingene kommer med en gang, i stedet for å skyve det under teppet. Lederne er tydelige, konkrete og konsekvente. Dette oppleves rettferdig, selv om ansatte kan synes det er "strengt". Hvis oppgaver ikke er fullførte ønsker man å finne ut hvorfor, og lære av det som (ikke) skjedde. Medarbeidersamtaler er viktige.

3: Strict Financial & Logistical Control

Lederne har stålkontroll på økonomi og logistikken. Det snakkes mye og høyt om tall og budsjetter. Man ønsker å overføre denne interessen til de ansatte.

Brettekanter, ryddige og oversiktlige lagere. Strenge rutiner for varepåfyll. Varer skal alltid være tilgjengelige for både ansatte og kunder. Hyppige varetellinger. Faste rutiner for mottak av varer.

4: Surveillance & Testing

Service, produktkunnskap, ryddighet og gjennomførelse av oppgaver testes jevnlig. Det kan være oppfølgingsspørsmål etter en infomail, en kleshenger som legges under et stativ, eller å sende en venn/bejket innom butikken på kvelden.

5: Comprehensive Training and never-ending Learning

Opplæring av nyansatte er alfa omega. I begynnelsen følges den ansatte svært tett opp, men får mer selvstendighet når den får opparbeidet erfaring og viser mestring. De andre ansatte får også ansvar for å "rette" den nyansatte i å gjøre feil.

Man er aldri ferdig utlært. Nye produkter kommer. Ny kunnskap trengs. Nye salgsteknikker testes ut. Det legges opp til at de ansatte kan lære og vokse. Lederne ønsker de ansatte opp og frem. Lederne har selv startet på gulvet og jobbet seg opp.

6: Social Modelling and Caregiving

Arbeidsplassen blir sett på som et trygt sted å være. De ansatte er stolte av å jobbe der. Lederne gir mye av seg selv og er hartarbeidende gode forbilder. De ansatte ser opp til lederne sine. Noen ønsker til og med å bli som dem. Lederne bryr seg virkelig om de ansatte, også som personer. Jobben kan faktisk bli karakterisert som en familie.

Appendix 4. The managers' thoughts about our findings

The e-mail from owner at the high-end fashion store:

1: Rigorous Attention to Detail & External Appearance

"Her tror jeg det er kulturen vi plasserer som er det viktigste. (Store name) har etter hvert fått et meget stabilt nøkkelpersonal, og disse er våre viktigste kulturbærere. Våre nyansatte blir dermed raskt presentert for kulturen vår, og dermed dratt inn i den. Passer ikke kulturen vår/ verdiene våre den ansatte opplever vi at vedkommende sier raskt opp selv".

2: Meticulous Planning, Execution & Follow-up

"Dette stemmer godt. Vi bruker mye tid på hvordan våre ansatte skal prioritere tiden sin".

"Stemmer. Vi bruker også en del tid på hvem som bør gjøre de forskjellige oppgavene. Det er stor forskjell på de ansattes gjennomføringsevne".

"Stemmer. Vi liker å si at vi gjør mer av det som fungerer, og mindre av det som ikke fungerte. Vi lærer de ansatte å evaluere hele tiden. Evaluer hvordan du klarte å selge 2 slips til skjorten etc".

3: Strict Financial & Logistical Control

"Åpenhet er en av våre verdier. Alle skal hvite "hvorfor om alt". Vi har også en (Store name) skole for alle våre butikkledere. Alle bør enkelt regne ut brutto fortjeneste, kalkulasjon etc.

Dette tar vi som en selvfølge".

4: Surveillance & Testing

"Ja, vi mener at vi er ganske gode på dette. Men vi liker ikke å overvåke våre ansatte. Men i en liten by som (City name) får vi fort høre om en ansatt ikke gjør jobben sin".

5: Comprehensive Training and never-ending Learning

"Stemmer, vi jobber med en modell hvor opplæring og egen innsats er like viktige".

6: Social Modelling and Caregiving

"Dette er viktig for oss. Vi lever gjennom The (Store name) family. Et begrep vi følger de ansatte føler stolthet rundt".

The e-mail from manager at the fast food restaurant:

1: Rigorous Attention to Detail & External Appearance

"Veldig viktig at konseptet som allerede er bestemt for oss blir fulgt opp og gjøres etter boka. Mener her at dette er viktig og at de ansatte føler en trygghet over faste regler og rutiner".

2: Meticulous Planning, Execution & Follow-up

"Jeg mener at grunnlaget for en bra dag og et bra skift er at ting er på plass og i orden når vi åpner. Dette ser jeg også hos mine ansatte som VELGER å komme tidligere enn de blir satt opp på vaktlista for å passe på at de rekker alt, alt er klart og de kan sette seg ned å ta litt frokost og slappe av litt før vi åpner restauranten".

3: Strict Financial & Logistical Control

"Vi ønsker at alle skal ta del i salg og budsjett. Vi tar ut mersalg lister hver dag. Hvem er super selger idag? Denne uken? Alltid spennende . På samme liste måler vi salg mot ifjor og budsjett og vårt mål. Hvor mange gjester har vi innom, hva klarte vi i snittsalg osv . Timessalg synes de fleste er morsomt å vite . Hva klarte vi denne timen? Gikk det bra? Hva kunne gått bedre ? Var det noe som gikk galt? Opplever også at medarbeider spør skifledere om time salg. De blir spesielt glade når de er svette, løpt rundt og hatt mange gjester, men så har alt gått smooth!"

4: Surveillance & Testing

"Umulig for oss dødelige å være på jobb 24-7. Så det å sende noen bekjente eller gå innom selv og ta tester er med på å øke kunnskap og viktige fokus områder. Dette er også en fordel da vi se ting fra gjesten sitt stå sted og ikke bare fra bak disken".

5: Comprehensive Training and never-ending Learning

"Helt enig!"

6: Social Modelling and Caregiving

"Kunne ikke sagt det bedre selv!"

The e-mail from manager at the children`s clothing store:

1: Rigorous Attention to Detail & External Appearance

”Tror absolutt at flere av disse punktene er veldig viktige. Men for oss, som jobber i en barnebutikk, så skal nettopp den frihetene være litt det. Ansatte møter på jobb i et antrekk som er representabelt men ikke et bestemt antrekk. Vi ønsker at kundene skal kjenne seg igjen i oss, og en samtale kan like ofte begynne med at en ansatt gir et kompliment til en kunde, som en kunde som havner i prat og gir kompliment på klesstilen til den ansatte vi har stående på jobb. Det at det skal være rent og ryddig er absolutt viktig for våres del, men vi kan også se til tider på flere butikker at der vi står å bygger om, og at butikken står litt på hode. Noe vi også velger å gjøre på dager som starter med å være litt rolige. Så pleier tallene å komme seg greit utover dagen, ikke alltid bare fordi vi har skiftet på dokker og endret på bord og vegger, men fordi kunden står med følelsen av at her skjer det noe, her står ikke di ansatte å venter på at jeg skal trække over dørterskelen. Dessverre i noen butikker, og jeg kan snakke av egen erfaring fra tidligere jobber hender dert at kunden unnskylder seg når di vil se på et plagg, fordi det er så brette kanter, eller så til di grader striglet at gjestene i butikken nesten ikke tør å røre noe. Men det skal så klart ryddes, og butikken skal gi kunden et godt intrykk”.

2: Meticulous Planning, Execution & Follow-up

”Ja, aktivetskaldere er noe vi bruker mye i alle butikkene, vi pleier tillegg å bokføre og skrive notater som var grunnen til suksee, eller hva vi kan gjøre bedre neste år, neste kampanje. Var det varen det var feil med, var det matriale, burde vi markedsført oss anderledes, er det grunnen til at det er ferie og alle er bortreist? Eller skyldes det at det er ferietid, dårlig vær og alle ble hjemme på kjøpesenteret. Det å hele tiden tenke tilbake på ting vi har gjort, for derfra å kunne se hva vi kan gjøre bedre som team. Hva har kundene sagt, slike ting er viktig å ta med en gang, skrive det ned, så man nettopp ikke glemmer det til neste aktivitet og ender opp med enda en fiasko iforhold til ansatte plassert på jobb, og varer som er kjøpt inn. Uten tvil så tror jeg mye av planleggingen nettopp skylder ledere, ansatte som vet nettopp det at ingen ting kan gjøres i siste liten. Planlegge godt, være føre var på både å følge med på hitlister, være tidlig ut om morgene, kanskje før andre ledere, så når de velger å komme på jobb, vel den varen som nå er tom på lageret bestile vi tre esker av før alle andre kom seg på jobb. Ikke minst, så tror jeg mye av dette skyldes utviklingen til sjefene og ansatte på tilbakemeldinger, ville gjøre seg bedre, ha en god attest, et godt arbeidsmiljø. Og ikke minst, som jeg sier til jentene, gjør du sånn at når noen andre jobber med deg, så skal di glede seg til du kommer på jobb. Fordi hun er alltid blid, positiv, ser løsninger eller kommer med forslag og prøver så godt hun kan. Gir du alt? Gir du di andre på jobb en glede av at nettopp jeg kom på jobb i dag. Og her kommer nettopp den delen med medarbeidersamtaler, følge opp, ta en kaffe, starte dagen med en prat der man også kan velge å sende en melding til en av jentene for å fortelle hvordan di andre på jobb skrøyt av hvordan jobb han eller henne gjorde sist dem jobbet. Vi må spille hverandre gode, og det betyr å ta tilbakemeldinger akkurat her og nå. At medarbeidersamtaler, samtaler generelt på tomanshånd skal skje så hippig at det er ikke skummelt, men en måte å gjøre oss bedre på”.

3: Strict Financial & Logistical Control

”Økonomi, bruttofortjeneste, salg, alle disse tingene er viktige faktorer for økonomi og det er viktig at de ansatte har forståelse for det. Det betyr ikke bare snakke i tall, men virkelig vise hva økning betyr. Hvorfor det noen ganger lønner seg å sette varer til en kampanje pris enn å bare dumpe det på 50%. At dette gjør noe med bunnlinja til butikken, om butikken har igjennomsnitt en måned med omsetning, men på feks nattåpent kliner til med -30% på hele butikken, og man henter en stor del av omsetningen den måneden, så taper vi mer på bunnlinja totalt. vi lærer opp til at det viktig at man sjekker bruttfortjenesten på varene før man setter dem ned, at man hyppig følger med på totalt på tallene på måneden. Ligger vi godt ann på måneden i bruttofortjeneste, og vi har råd til å kaste oss med på en kampanje og kjøre noen tilbud, vel så kan vi det uten at vi taper penger. Vi har gjennomføring på medarbeidersamtaler, vi får daglig og ukentlig tall med forklaringer på, slik at deltider kan forstå hva det innebærer. Men økonomisk i personalmøter, så viser vi hva det betyr å ha en god selger på jobb, at vi som butikkleidere og sjefen kan bidra med, men hvor viktig det er at vi ikke glemmer di som jobber på kvelden, og som faktisk kan dra inn helt vanvittige summer om de har de riktige verktøyene, tilbakemeldinger og produktkunnskapen, alt dette er viktig for å gjøre oss bedre. Vi er en bedrift som er hyppige på varetellinger, og liker å ha

kontrollen. Både iforhold av kontroll på varer som kommer inn, svinn blandt kunder, og også for å vise de ansatte at vi har kontroll. Jeg tror at på butikker som har varetelling en gang i året har de mindre kontroll og oversikt. Hva ville det sagt om oss som ledere? Om vi skal vente et år på å forebygge svinn, om vi kanskje må flytte et bord, en vegg, om vi har en blindsoner, om man har en ansatt som stjeler, men som slutter, så oppdager man det ikke før om 6 måneder fordi det er neste telling. Varetellinger gir en kjempe kontroll, jeg er heller ikke i tvil at den rutinen vi har på varetellinger gjør at vi ikke bygger lager heller, men at vi har en høy turn over på lagrene våres, nettopp fordi vi ikke glemmer varer som blir liggende på et bakrom. Istedet så er det heller, den ja, stemmer på tide å få ut igjen, eller vi har mer av den. Har man også med deltider på sånne ting så har de større forståelse for hva som befinner seg på lageret, hva det er vi har på lageret, hva det er lov å la ligge på lageret uten at det skal koste oss penger. Varer som det er viktig å ha innenfor rekkevidde daglig, hvilke varer vi kan legge på et fjernlager fordi varen ikke er relevant før om et par måneder”

4: Surveillance & Testing

”Her kjenner vi oss igjen så til di grader, dette er virkelig noe vi lederne gjør. Og det er ikke alltid noe di ansatte trenger å vite, det handler om å gi ansvar men samtidig som leder ta noen kontroller ut at du alltid trenger å vite at du gjør det. Og etterhvert, gi disse verktøyene videre til sine heltider, ledere, sjefer, lærer, så di gjør det videre. Så har man flere ledd som passer på, og gjør jobben bedre. Vi bruker mye mysterishoppere, vi som ledere dukker opp når som helst og hvor som helst, ikke fordi dette skal være skremmende, men fordi det skal være en helt vanlig dag at vi utfører god service, at butikken ser fin ut, at vi ikke har ansatte som står å henger på jobb, vi skal ikke trenge å måtte være redde for at en ansatt står med mobil på jobb, har venner hengende i butikken. Fordi nettopp dette er noe vi har vært veldig klare om, hvordan føler du deg som gjest i en annen butikk der du føler du må avbryte de ansatte på jobb fordi de har en privat samtale, eller at du ikke får oppmerksomhet fordi hun i kassa står med mobilen. Dette er noe vi snakker mye om. Vi gir fritt ansvar på mange ting, men som alle oppgaver, man skal gjøre seg fortjent til det. Jeg skal ikke ha at det høres i kassene i butikken at de ansatte teller veksler når klokken er kvart på ni. Jeg vil at om en kunde kommer inn kvart på og skal legge igjen 50, 500 eller 5000 hos oss, så skal dem føle seg velkommen. Dette er noe vi snakker høyt om selv, og di første opplæringsdagene, så sier vi ofte.. ta deg en runde rundt i senteret også hører på hvor mange som gjør seg klar til å stenge. Føl på den følesen, har du lyst til å gå inn i en butikk der du vet at den personen er så klar for å gå hjem at den teller kassa og nesten har på seg jakka?”

5: Comprehensive Training and never-ending Learning

Vi har en opplæringsmal på tre sider, som den som står for opplæring skal krysse av og fylle ut når man har godt igjennom og den som er på opplæring skal krysse av når de føler at dette kan jeg. Dette er også et viktig virkemiddel på, at alle jentene har hatt samme opplæring. At di sier de samme tingene skulle det være en vareretur, reklamasjon, misfornøyd kunde. Svaret skal være det samme uansett hvem av di ansatte en kunde oppsøker. Det gjør at vi står mere selvsikre og ikke minst for kunden sin del så har vi kontroll på det vi gjør. Du får ikke et annet svar om du drar til en av di andre butikkene. På personalmøter så går vi igjennom produktkunnskaper, di som har jobbet lengre hos oss deler sine erfaringer og måter di kan gi ansatte en fordel på å selge varen til kunden. Hva fungerte når du solgte den? Hva var kunden sine spørsmål, hva la du mest vekt på? Vi deler erfaringer, ofte om en av deltidene er ferdig opplært, så lar vi di ha kveldsvakt med en av di nye. Mye pga av at en deltid kan lettere tenke tilbake på hva hun syns var vanskelig på stengerutiner, når man skulle jobbe første gang alene. De utveksler ideer og gir ofte di nye litt ekstra styrke i det å være ny og at ting er litt nytt.

6: Social Modelling and Caregiving

”Ambassadører, jeg vet ikke hvor mange ganger jeg som leder for høre hvor flotte ambassadører det jobber rundt omkring i butikkene våres. Nå skal det sies at vi har noen ledere over oss som vi får tilbakemeldinger av, vi blir lagt merke til og vi blir virkelig satt pris på. Vi starter i intervju-prosessen å fortelle litt om firma, eierne og hva noe av di viktigste grunnleggende verdiene er for oss som jobber der. Grunnen til at vi som oftest åpner butikker der andre legger ned. At vi både blir belønnet med heder og ære, samtidig som di ansatte har litt over gjennomsnitt i lønn nettopp fordi vi vil sette pris på di gode ansattene, og at om man beviser det i prøvetiden så er det både ekstra ub-tilegg og belønninger. Vi har eiere som sier selv, vi er gode på å ansatte gode ledere og derifra så er ikke the sky the limit. Vi blir ikke nedtrykt om vi har dårlige tall, vi blir heller bedt om å tenke anderledes, komme med ideer, eller utveklse tanker med hverandre. Det gjør også at vi som jobber som våre ledere, om vi vet at di gjør en god jobb, visst jeg vet at di beste av di beste står på jobb i dag, og det er tallene de klarte å levere. Vel, vet du hva? I dag så har vi gjort det beste vi kan. Det betyr at det er en ny dag i morgen, hold humøret oppe og tenk nytt. Har man et godt forbilde strekker man seg gjerne for å bli like god. Positive tilbakemeldinger og skryt fra et forbilde bygger selvtillitt, mens konstruktiv kritikk oppleves som visdomsord man kan lære av. Tror det at butikklederne kjenner hverandre, butikkledere og distriktledere har god kommunikasjon, eierne viser seg i butikkene ovs, gjør at vi føler oss som en liten, men stor, familie. I tillegg øker nok stoltheten og ønskert om å gjøre det bra når man kjenner dem man jobber for”.