

Business Managers: the transfer of skills at risk

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The transfer of the Business Manager profession deteriorates when everyone only teaches what they master best. Without safeguards, the role becomes impoverished generation after generation despite a promise of richness and complexity.

Imagine a Business Manager in an IT services company or a consulting and engineering firm who, as soon as they started their role, was trained in 100% of the tasks they need to accomplish. They master all aspects of the profession: from commercial prospecting to team management, including client account development and administrative management. A rich and varied profession, with many components to balance.

When everyone primarily transmits what they master

However, when it's time for this Business Manager to pass on their knowledge to a junior, something strange comes into play. I call it the pyramid of unlearning. This phenomenon means that, naturally, they primarily transmit only the tasks in which they excel or enjoy. The more complex tasks, those they master less well or find less rewarding, are often omitted. It is also possible that certain tasks have simply been forgotten by this senior, as they may not have needed them to build their success. If reminded of these tasks, they can always say they managed without them. This, in a way, justifies in their eyes that it is not an essential task to transmit.

The pyramid of unlearning

Thus, generation after generation, the transfer of knowledge deteriorates, reducing a profession once complete to a simplified, impoverished version. This is the mechanics of the pyramid of unlearning. Each new generation of managers receives a 'lightened' version of the profession. The result? A profession that, over time, loses its richness, appeal, and demand.

A theoretically rich profession, impoverished in practice

This reality is all the more striking because, despite this wastage, the profession of Business Manager continues to be marketed as a rich and complex profession. Which it is, in theory. However, the reality encountered by many junior Business Managers in a significant number of companies is quite different. Instead of a high-value-added role where they're expected to think and take initiatives, they're asked to conform to rigid KPIs and meaningless processes, sometimes poorly explained even by seniors. The most surprising? 'We've always done it this way' often seems to be the only justification for these practices.

Breaking the chain of wastage

But there is a solution to break this pyramid of unlearning: companies that become aware of this degradation can set up safeguards. By appointing internal trainers, or 'guardians of the temple,' they ensure that all components of the profession are transmitted, without relying solely on each manager's personal skills. These trainers are there to guarantee a complete transmission while being open to the profession's developments and field realities.

Making the transfer a collective responsibility

Furthermore, they allow sharing the responsibility of the transfer with the managers themselves, who must accept that some of their weaknesses require support.

Companies that choose to adopt this strategic approach give back all their depth to their professions, preserve their attractiveness, and above all, guarantee the sustainability of complete know-how.