

Interview with Celine Schillinger

You are the Change Agent within Sanofi Pasteur. How did that come about?

I'm not the only one, fortunately for the company; but I'm visible. Just because I've understood 2 simple things. 1) Doing is not enough: you have to let others know what you do. Not only because we're living in an era of communication, and that image and branding are important. Many people are uneasy with what they perceive as being superficial. Working out loud is fundamental because collaboration is now key to having things done. In our fast moving, ever disrupted business environment, you have to collaborate in a much broader way than what the org chart suggests. Extended collaboration inside, and outside the organization! There's an amazing potential in connecting the enterprise and its ecosystem, to co-produce added value. Making others know what you do is a way to generate new ideas, new possibilities.

2) You can't count on the organization alone (your management, Human Resources...) to make you progress and shine. You have to do it by yourself. That's why visibility is important. Freelancers know that very well, but people working in large organizations have a tendency to rely on the system. Unfortunately, the system isn't very good at spotting talent – it still often rewards obedience and conformity. It's also biased against women. So, visibility is about taking control of your intellectual development and your career.

Now, when it comes to being a change agent, I think it's a matter of mindset or education (how much do you / have you been authorized to challenge the norm?) and courage, to speak up and make things happen, in a constructive way. I've also been lucky to cross paths with Change Agents Worldwide, a great "incubator" for change agents!

Your presentation is about the challenges you encountered tackling the engagement & diversity issues within Sanofi Pasteur. What are the key drivers for fostering transformation & change?

It starts with a personal attitude to transformation and how you communicate about it. Change doesn't have to be cold, scary and bureaucratic. Change can be cool and exciting. Of course, if you're being imposed change from the top, and you detect unfairness or lip service behind this, you won't be excited at all. Let me take an

example. A company wants to foster collaborative work, and decides to move staff from individual offices to open spaces. The leaders – who've made this decision – claim collaboration is good, but don't change anything in the way they work (and keep their individual offices). How would you react? Change goes with co-creation, and exemplarity.

Culture change is probably the most difficult thing to do, especially in large organizations. In my views, it's possible if you put together 6+1 elements: an inspiring, collectively built vision of where you want to go; openness to the outside world, connection with all stakeholders; education; reshaping of HR & leadership practices; development of social collaboration tools and opportunities; performance monitoring. All this should be collectively enabled, by a network.

Why is a balanced diversity within a company so important?

A balanced company gives all its talents a chance, both men and women. It includes rather than excludes – as what is often the norm. A diversity in gender, but also in age, culture, academic background, experience... is a guarantee of survival. In our networked world, where connection goes hand in hand with emotion, organizations need to be as diverse as their customers to connect with them well. Companies which haven't yet understood that diversity is a critical business advantage are not managed by clever people. Investors, beware! Poor diversity means a company is very much run along 20th Century mental models. I wouldn't bet on it.

What are your expectations for the Summit?

I enjoy the Enterprise 2.0 Summit a lot. It's a nice blend of collaboration practitioners, thought leaders, and vendors. Everybody is interested in changing organizations, and how new practices and technologies can get us there. You can get a lot of ideas from the Summit. It's also a warm community which keeps exchanging on social networks between events. I just can't wait to be there.



Celine Schillinger
Sanofi-Pasteur