

Intelligent feeling and feeling intelligence: An unbeatable combination

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In his new book, IESE Professor Santiago Álvarez de Mon presents an original proposal: give emotivity priority over reason in the conduct of "the business of management and the adventure of life".

In the book "[La lógica del corazón](#)" ("The Logic of the Heart"), IESE Professor [Santiago Álvarez de Mon](#) takes us on a journey, via philosophical reflection and interviews with business professionals, to the center of emotivity, suggesting that we apply emotivity to management. Themes addressed in the various sections of the work include: childhood (the origin of everything), school, vocation and profession, team work, mistakes, and the management trade.

Childhood is undoubtedly a crucial period of life, when the foundations are laid. In an interview with Álvarez de Mon, the executive president of Microsoft España, Rosa García, describes how her father taught her a love of work, dependability, rigor..., in a word, "if you're going to make a mistake, be sure to do it while you're working". Of her mother, García recalls the kindness, the sense of security, and the unconditional love.

But why is there so much distrust nowadays? Perhaps because, sadly, many of us have, in o-

ne form or another, had the experience described in the following story by Rezzori: a father encourages his son to jump from a high branch down into his arms. The child jumps, the father steps back and lets him fall to the floor. The child cries and the father explains: I did it so you know never to trust anybody. We should be capable, say the authors of "La lógica del corazón", of regaining the innocence of our earliest days, because trust, generosity, optimism and friendship are key to success in any kind of initiative: we should "unlearn" the distrust that experience has taught us.

For his part, Argentinean conductor Ángel Mahler tells Professor Álvarez de Mon that talent has to do with pleasure, and that true pleasure is doing what you enjoy doing. Mahler chose his profession when he was only six years old, and became what he wanted to be. Success is everybody's destiny if they discover their true talent, but... do we know our own talents? Indeed, who makes a good boss? Possibly the best boss is one who gives his employees freedom. Just as parents must step aside at the right moment to let their children reach maturity on their own, bosses should not give their employees more than general guidelines. Motivation is something for each individual to deal with on his own. To manage is to discriminate, in the sense of "personalizing".

In companies, it is crucial to work as a team and make the best use of every team member's talent. What should we do if one person stands out above all the others? One option is to do what Phil Jackson, the Chicago Bulls coach, did with Michael Jordan. He told him he was not going to judge him on his individual performance, but on his success in helping his teammates to improve. Very soon Jordan was the best player in the League, but it was not long before the Bulls themselves stopped being a mediocre outfit and notched up several NBA titles. Jordan triumphed because he made his team play better.

How do you win an impossible game? According to Professor Álvarez de Mon, you can win an impossible game if you don't know it's impossible and are not misled by "common sense". When talent and the human spirit break free, it has been demonstrated that there are no limits other than those we create for ourselves. If some companies have succeeded in winning impossible games, it is because, with their unity, nerve and confidence, they created the right climate to release major reserves of talent and energy.

Nevertheless, we also have to learn to be alone and accept the opportunity cost of every decision, handling the inevitable mistakes with patience and a sense of humor. A mistake is not a failure, and if we come to terms with it, we are guaranteed to learn something and find the way to succeed. We need to learn to handle the moments of tension: a leader is a person who remains calm when others lose their nerve. In a company, for example, who is going to

have the strength of character to open new markets in China, lucidly embracing a physical, social and intellectual solitude? It is a happy paradox that only a person who is comfortable on his own can work in a team.

Very often, urgent matters leave us no time for important things. We put off important things precisely because they are important. But "we cannot really see except with the heart. The essence of things is invisible to the eye", said Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in "The Little Prince". We need calm and serenity to savor the silence and listen to the messages of our delicate inner voice. In fact, the true seat of intelligence may not be reason but the heart. An intelligent heart and a heartfelt intelligence make an unbeatable combination.

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