

### **Prologue:**

I lived my yearly years in a quite contrary world. I was born 37 years ago to the family what was a mixture of two cultures. My father's family line is Finnish Swede (5,7% of population are Swedish-speaking), and mother's family line is Finnish-speaking. Swedish-speaking Finns has a strong own culture and feeling of togetherness. While many Finnish-speaking dislikes Finnish Swede (I know I shouldn't have said this but in research among Finnish young people, 75% of boys and 52% of girls said they dislike Finnish Swede. It maybe because every Finnish must learn Swedish at school).

I grow up in small town Kotka, what was at the same time very narrow-minded (small town atmosphere, 30 000 inhabitants) and very full of live (thanks to Finland's largest export harbour).

Finland was also strongly divided to blue-collar and white-collar workers in 60's and 70's. Especially in Kotka that sense of "class struggle" has been strong. Town had (and still has) a heavy-industry structure: paper mills, pulp mills, saw mills, heavy metal industries, shipyards etc.

And all this was packed into small island. In a same street lived side-by-side industrialist and factory worker as well as a "bum".

All the aspects of the life were in sight.

This "fertile soil" has given me ability to get along with different kind of people, and developed me as a natural negotiator.

"We all have our own perception of the real world".

### **CAREER**

Before I was able to start my engineer studies at Kotka Institute of Technology, at least 18 months work experience of "proper skilled work" was required.

So I spent 3 years (1979-82) in Kotka harbour repairing and maintaining harbour-cranes.

Not only I become familiar with hard work and tough working environment, but I also become interested in working teams and groups. In harbour I started to wonder why and how different occupational groups create own groups and teams (dockers, cranemen, mechanics etc.), and how those divided to sub-groups, and still for outsiders we were one strong, cohesive group.

Understanding groups and teams behaviour, and what effects groups norms and "unwritten laws" can have to work performance, have helped me a lot in my later career.

My next work was a part-time salesman at a Finnish "Radio Shack" (part-time because at the same time I was studying at Kotka Institute of Technology).

I was a specialist in "computers" (the famous Commodore 64), but I was also selling other products (hi-fi stereo sets, televisions and other household appliances).

In those three years (1983-86) I learned, not only face-to-face selling, but how it is possible to sell almost everything to everybody! This led me to questions of business ethics. Is human free to buy what ever he/she wants (even with a little help from sellers/advertiser) or should markets be regulated somehow (drugs/alcohol/cigarettes)? And by who and where should the line been drawn?

I am very keen on business ethics, and I believe it will be one of the major questions in the near future. (And I strongly believe it is a time for a new approach to marketing based on real needs of people.)

After my graduation I spent one year as a product manager in a photocopy paper manufacturing, just to find out that from 8am to 4pm work was not to mean to me. So I changed back to business world in 1987.

I went to work for Hi-Flex Finland, which was at that time a part of the giant conglomerate BTR Plc.

I started as sales engineer in department, which import Enerpac High Force Tools to Finland. Main customers were industry's maintenance departments, engineering firms and departments (workholding products for product automation), construction companies, bridge erection companies, OEM customers ...

Sales to end-users were made by direct sales or via authorized dealer or through our own depots. So I got experience of all kind of b-to-b sales. I travelled 140 days per year and visited approx. 4 customers per day.

After one year I was promoted Enerpac Product Manager. In product manager's job I was more involved to the marketing. So I travel 140 days per year, visited approx. 4 customers per day and made marketing strategies and plans.

Two more years and I was promoted Head of the Tool department, which meant travelling 140 days per year, visited 4 customers per day, creating marketing plans and strategies, draw up budgets for the department and planned and controlled all the department's activities.

In 1993 our market share was over 60 % in hydraulic high force tool markets!

In 1994 my wife and I decided it is time to go ahead. We moved back to Kotka and I changed my work place and position inside company (in position where weekly working time will not be 60 to 90 hours and I do not have to travel so much, at least I thought so). So I started as depot manager in Karhula depot (today Karhula is part of Kotka city). Depot Manager is responsible for all the activities of Strategic Business Unit (depot).

In my work the most difficult function is to lead people. As an engineer I am trained so, that if I push a button I know what is going to happen. But humans are not built like machines.

So we made the plan where my wife was first going to start her studies at University of Kuopio, and after her graduations I was going to start my. (Today she is a lecturer of anaesthetist and surgical nursing at Kotka Polytechnic).

In autumn 1997 I joined to one of the famous British Universities to study MBA as a part-time student.

But after first year I gave up those studies. I understood it was impossible fit together extremely busy business working life and part-time studies.

Why in modern world of hand-held cellular phones, e-mails and computers I have to spend valuable time in a classroom and listen to a teacher speaking about things I can find from books. Do they have some "secret knowledge" which cannot be found anywhere? I doubt. I have noticed many teachers have good theoretical knowledge but

generally they do not have experience of real business world (what makes me angry. How you can be a good coach if you have not played the game yourself!).

I am a part-time teacher at AEL (Finnish largest provider of further technical training), and I cannot imagine giving lessons of hydraulic hoses and components if I do not have a strong, empirical and educational, background.

So I started seek out a modern and effective way to finish my MBA. After careful selection of possible choices I decided to make an application to the University what best fulfils my requirements: modern methods, I can study when my timetable allows and where teachers and tutors have experience of real business life!

### **Objectives:**

My objective in the near future (within next three-to-four years) is to move ahead to Senior Management level at a large, international or MD at small, B-to-B company. But for those positions I have found my knowledge insufficient in following areas:

1. To understand the nature of complex organisation: How a “good organisation” works and what benefits it can yields.
2. To understand core areas of managerial theories and practise: What is a “good manager”? How to get maximum output of your organisation and still make it a good working place for people.
3. To master techniques of information analysis and decision-making: How to see early signs of warnings or possibilities. How to handle all the information flows in a businesslike.
4. To understand business economics. To understand those principles that are necessary for an understanding of the business world.
5. Small firms. Functions of small firms in the economy. The major problems they face and how those problems are linked to the failure. How to survive among giants companies.

In our yacht club we have a phrase: “ A skilful captain get over difficulties which a wise captain can avoid.”

To be a good “captain” I have to know where the “reefs” and “shallows” are and be able to read a sign of an approaching gale as well as a favourable wind.

### **Management:**

How to use a business development process to help you start a new business:  
The E-Myth: Why Most Small Businesses do not Work and What to do About it  
(Michael E. Gerber; ISBN: 0-88730-472-9, \$15.00)

Developing Negotiation Skills:

Friendly Persuasion: How to Negotiate and Win (Bob Woolf, ISBN: 0-425-13039-8, \$8.95)

Developing Management Skills the Drucker Way:  
The Effective Executive: (Peter F. Drucker, ISBN: 0-88730-612-8, \$12.00)

Drucker: Management Topics:  
Managing for the Future: The 1990s and Beyond (Peter F. Drucker, ISBN: 0-452-26984-9, \$13.95)

The Practice of Management:  
The Practice of Management: (Peter F. Drucker, ISBN: 0-88730-613-6, \$16.00)

Loyalty in Business:  
The Loyalty Effect: The Hidden Force Behind Growth, Profits, and Lasting Values (Frederick F. Reichheld, ISBN: 0-87584-448-0, \$24.95)

Top Performance: How to Develop Excellence:  
Top Performance: How to Develop Excellence in Yourself and Others (Zig Ziglar; ISBN: 0-425-09973-3, \$7.95)

Management and Organisational Behaviour: (Laurie J. Mullins ISBN 0-273-61598-X)

- Management and Organisational Behaviour
- Groups and Leadership:
- Context of the Organisation:
- Management as an Integrating Activity:
- Improving Organisational Performance:

## **MARKETING:**

Principles of Marketing (Kinner / Bernhardt / Krentler ISBN 0-673-46555-1)

- Marketing and the Environment
- The Marketplace
- Distribution
- Promotion
- Pricing

International Marketing Strategy:  
International Marketing Strategy (CIM Study Text ISBN 0-7517-4073-X)

Customer Service as a Marketing Tool:  
Positively Outrageous Service: How to Surprise and Astound Your Customers and Win Them for Life (T. Scott Gross; ISBN: 0-446-39468-8, \$11.99)

How to Drive Your Competition Crazy:  
How to Drive Your Competition Crazy: Creating Disruption for Fun and Profit (Guy Kawasaki; ISBN: 0-7868-6124-X, \$22.95)

One on One Marketing:

The One to One Future: Building Relationships One Customer at a Time (Don Peppers and Martha Rogers, Ph.D.; ISBN: 0-385-42528-7, \$24.95)

## **FINANCE**

Managing Your Cash Flow: The Key to Small Business Survival:

The Small Business Survival Guide: How to Manage Your Cash, Profits & Taxes (Robert E. Fleury, \$17.95)

Financial Control In Organisations:

Financial Management (R. Brockington ISBN)

Budgeting Basics

Budgeting Basics and Beyond: A Complete Step-By-Step Guide for Nonfinancial Managers (Jae K. Shim & Joel G. Siegel; ISBN: 0-13-312232-8, \$19.95)

## **ECONOMICS:**

Overview of Economics:

Economics for Business and Management (K. Alec Chrystal / Richard G. Lipsey. ISBN 0-19-877538-5)

## **HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:**

Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Perspective (Ian Beardwell / Len Holden ISBN 0-273-62230-7)

- Human resource management and its organisational context
- Resourcing the organisation
- Developing the human resource
- The employment relationship

## **CORPORATE STRATEGY:**

Exploring Corporate Strategy (Gerry Johnson / Kevan Scholes ISBN 0-13-525635-6)

- Corporate strategy
- Strategic management in practice
- Strategic analysis
- Strategic choice
- Strategy implementation

### **OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT:**

Operations Management (N. Slack / S. Chambers / C. Harland / A. Harrison / R. Johnston ISBN 0-273-62688-4)

- Operations management
- The strategic role and objectives of operations
- Operations strategy

### **RELATIONSHIP MARKETING**

A relationship approach to marketing: the need for a new paradigm (Grönroos, Christian 1990)

Relationsmarknadsföring: Från 4 P till 30 R (Relationship Marketing: From 4 Ps to 30 Rs) (Gummesson E. 1998) (This is a Swedish book, but I hope I can find a English one)

### **RESEARCH**

Monitoring the Competition

Monitoring the Competition: Find Out What Is Really Going on Over There (Leonard M. Fuld; ISBN: 0-471-85261-9, \$24.95)

### **DEVELOPING PERSONAL POWER**

Improving Your Human Relations Skills: The Carnegie Method

How to Win Friends & Influence People (Dale Carnegie, ISBN: 0-671-42517-X, \$5.95)

Winning the Sales and Marketing Argument:

Target-Based Presentation (Keith Silverang; ISBN 952-9535-38-4)