

READERS – LEADERS

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Deepak Subramanian – Unilever, Global Head Fabric Sensations Category and Vice President Homecare SE Asia, Australia and New Zealand

I've known Arri since 2012. We first came into contact when he was supporting the new CEO and the new Unilever Management Team in Central & Eastern Europe (CEE) through a leadership process. I was also a new member of this new leadership team, having been recently promoted to Vice-President for Marketing. The context was tough – the business had been underperforming for a few years and the new MT had been appointed to bring renewed energy to the organization.

I have experienced a lot of the learnings that Arri describes in this book first-hand by implementing the theories / frameworks in practice during my time in CEE. Looking back, I believe these were fundamental to the business turnaround we managed to achieve as well as in people's energy. Critical to this process were concepts like Healthy Friction, Freedom within a Framework, the power of relationships, and process as a foundation to securing results.

Along the way, I also had the chance to connect with Arri at a deeper level via individual coaching sessions. I am super thankful and grateful to him for helping me understand myself better and also questioning some of the foundational mental models that I have carried with me since my childhood. The three pitfalls of leadership Arri writes about are definitely real, and

successful leaders will need to overcome them in order to be stronger for today's Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) World.

I've continued to work with Arri in each of my subsequent roles, shaping my top leadership teams. And every time, the process has become even more enlightening and insightful. I would strongly recommend leaders who want to develop and thrive in these uncertain times to connect with Arri and to work with the frameworks in this book.

Patrick Anderson, Loomis International, CEO, Stockholm, Sweden

I have known Arri personally and professionally for many years. It started when I was with Unilever in Scandinavia. We changed the organisation significantly, addressed how we interacted with each other, and designed together the future development of the business. It was very interesting to be part of that journey, and most importantly it was very successful. After my time at Unilever I have had several CEO roles in different companies, and in one way or another Arri has always been part of developing the management in those companies, both the top management team and also the next layer of management (top 100 team). In all cases, working with Arri led to successful results, and the companies have all developed in the right direction. So, I have personally and practically experienced the ideas and models Arri describes in this book and I can conclude that they work. As a CEO I still use much of the content of the book on a daily basis, it has been an important part of developing myself as a person and as a CEO.

Marianne Kirkegaard, President & CEO CSM Bakery Solutions, Copenhagen, Denmark/Atlanta, USA

I was first exposed to Arri's leadership development philosophies as a young manager in Unilever. At the time, we had a lot of challenges in our team. Most prominent was our inability to work together which was due to the fact that we did not know each other well enough, and maybe for that same reason, did not trust or respect each other. Since then, in different leadership teams and different companies, I have 'called in Arri' – to help us build stronger teams that not only complemented each other, but consequently ended up being much better role models for the rest of the organisation.

In addition, Arri taught me the most important leadership lesson of them all: Freedom in a Framework. I have lived by this guidance ever since, in the many different leadership roles I have had over the years. I have also applied this as guidance when accepting new job opportunities, whether executive or non-executive roles. When considering a new role, I always ask myself: "Is the framework clear within which 'they' want me to deliver, and are they offering full freedom within it?" If so, most challenges can be overcome.

As a leader myself, I have learned that whether it's the turnaround of a poorly performing company or the growth journey of a more successful one – selecting the right people, spending time clarifying and aligning on the right framework and thereafter offering them full freedom to act within it – is always the right approach. If it does not work you have either chosen the wrong people, not identified and clarified the right framework, or in the end, not stayed loyal to offering them freedom after all. When you think about it, it also makes life as a leader much easier and risk-free as this way of working comes with trust - which is, whatever the situation may be, the most energising feeling there is.

Other than supporting numerous leadership teams I have been a part of, Arri has also helped me tremendously when it comes to my own development as a leader and as a human being, mother, wife, and friend. Regarding the latter, I was lucky enough to attend one of Arri's week-long Leadership Programs – which is to date the most rewarding personal development experience I have had. At the time, it became clear to me that up until the moment I entered the program, I never really truly understood what 'getting outside one's comfort zone' meant. The program came at a perfect time for me, when I really needed a bit of a wake-up call. Very important events of my life had happened in the preceding years; I had lost my mother, become a mother myself for the second time, embarked on an executive MBA (as I was so worried that I had stopped learning); I travelled a lot with work and I had just started my first real General Manager role at Unilever. Looking back, it was quite a handful – but for whatever reason, I did not think so at the time. On the way to the Leadership Program, I remember arriving late as the flight was delayed. I was in a conference call all the way from the airport, and I still recall wondering how I could fit in another list of conference calls during the days of the program. Arri had told us not to do 'work' – but at the time I was apparently still selfish enough to think that the business couldn't do without me for 6 days. Little did I know that in the beautiful program location there was hardly any WIFI, and there certainly was no time. The days were full, starting with an early morning group run and finishing late in the evening

after a lot of laughs, tears and unexpected experiences.

In every way, I spent six days outside my comfort zone, yet it felt very comforting and safe. We were dancing, singing, boxing, and at the same time exploring our leadership styles and learning a lot from each other – all of it in a very safe environment facilitated by Arri. I came to the place worrying about many things, and I left feeling comfortable that I did not have to worry about everything. Instead, I had learned how to identify the things I should worry about and how to spend less energy on everything else. The latter is a lifelong learning experience and I am still no expert, but I feel blessed that I received this training as early as I did, as it has certainly made my leadership life so much more enjoyable.

Following these experiences, I have no hesitation in recommending that you read this book. But, even better, let me recommend you to live it!

Arthur English, G2Ocean, CEO and Martha Lehmann-Røed, G2Ocean, Global HR & Organisation Development Director, Bergen, Norway

Arri has supported G2Ocean in our journey towards a high-performance culture. His ideas on how relationships and behaviours accelerate efficiency in global organisations have greatly assisted our progress.

Arri's techniques on how to master behaviour, manage 'healthy friction' and enter into constructive dialogue between colleagues – both in the management team and across the wider organisation – have been very useful. This has particularly been the case whilst we worked on developing a common culture in our new global company.

Arri has also been coaching the management team, providing insight into his communication models and practical support on how to develop leadership in a high-performing organisation. We can highly recommend this book for its practical approach on how to master behaviour in order to strengthen performance.

**Harm Goossens, Unilever, EVP Global Markets and Channels,
Beauty and Personal Care, London, UK**

If you are truly interested in getting the best out of the people around you, if you are truly interested in people getting the best out of themselves, and if you are truly convinced that creating the best time in people's lives is what we all should aim for, Arri's approach is what you need. He has helped me and my leadership team emerge as winners from some extremely difficult times. We turned the company around into a growth engine and we grew ourselves. Arri helped us with very intense workshops and one to one interventions; often confrontational, but always with respect and care. His concept of Healthy Friction, where he kept on reminding us that we were not fighting against each other but with each other, opened up the leadership team completely. And from there the total company.

I would recommend every leader to work with Arri and read his book because the essence of leadership is about getting the best out of people.

**Marijke Kaptein, CEO Bureau for Financial Surveillance and former
CFO of FIOD**

**Wim Boogaard, Interim Director, with latest jobs as CEO VSL,
Managing Director of TNO Energy Transition and Managing
Director of DNV GL Energy
Rotterdam, The Netherlands**

As a couple, coming from different backgrounds (law and economics), both of us have grown into leadership positions in highly professional organisations; Wim in commercial companies and Marijke in public organisations. Such careers demand regular reflection on performance and next steps. Arri has assisted at several steps of both our careers. We read this new book with pleasure. The seemingly simple models in combination with the exemplifying stories make the book a must-read for leaders. We both worked individually with Arri as our coach. We lived through his week-long leadership program, and have introduced Arri to several other professionals to help them in their careers and lives. You only do that if you trust the process and the outcome. Process and trust are at the core of this book. It fits into a history of many years between us.

We both would recommend the reader not only to read the book but also to work with Arri to really benefit from his very rare skill and insight in people.

Kees van der Graaf, Chairman Supervisory Boards GrandVision NV and BasicFit NV, Non-executive member of the Board of EnPro Industries, Founder and Chairman FSHD Unlimited/Facio Therapies, former Board member Unilever NV/Ltd, former member of the Carlsberg Supervisory Board, The Netherlands

This new book by Arri Pauw is quite unique in two very important dimensions. First, it stands out because it addresses one of the most difficult aspects of leadership. It is relatively easy to understand an issue, it is also not too difficult to develop and agree a strategy. What is really difficult is implementing the newly developed strategy, by getting buy-in from your wider team, and more importantly getting the full team to commit to delivering the agreed implementation plan. Arri describes in a powerful manner – using real examples – how a leader can master the required behavioural changes through engaging the team, using elements like healthy friction, open dialogues and consultative decision making.

The second element he addresses in a powerful way is this issue which needs to be resolved in every multi-country, multi-product category organisation. What do you need to do centrally and what do you do locally? If an organisation wants to be successful, it has to solve this issue for the organisation and its leadership in relevant ways. I have wrestled with this particular issue on several occasions. (Unilever ice cream complexity reduction, same at Wrigley Europe, at Carlsberg for the many different glasses, and at GrandVision for the frames). The result is almost always a new operating framework. In discussing the framework, one always ends up in a discussion about winning and losing between the Locals and the Headquarter team. This discussion quickly develops into a fight, with just losers. Arri offers a great solution by describing the “Freedom within a Framework”.

Reading through the book I constantly recognised situations from my own business engagements. In the chapters about Leadership dynamics, I learned a lot about how, through exaggeration, you can unintentionally shift acceptable constructive behaviours into unacceptable, counter-productive behaviours. These are very important insights for all leaders.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Arri’s new book.

Nina Skage, Partner Vest Corporate Advisors, Bergen, Norway

I first met Arri Pauw late in 2008. At the time, I worked for Rieber & Son ASA, a family owned Norwegian multinational. The company had just appointed a Swedish CEO who knew Arri and invited him to work with us. This was something new and refreshing for the group, and a very different approach from other consultants the company had used before. I myself had just been appointed Vice President Organization and Personnel for the group, and was new in a role that the company had not had before. In addition, the group was due to go through a major transition from individual units in multiple countries towards establishing a “One Integrated Food Company”. Arri was introduced to us by our CEO as our guide through this transition. The supervisory board had set a challenging target for the management team. To achieve the target, the management team and the wider group of senior leaders in all countries needed to drastically shift their ways of working. With great help and guidance from Arri, our transition followed the How-approach described in this book. Together, we successfully delivered on target for Rieber & Son ASA.

I then became CEO at the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) in January 2014. Before taking up the position, I approached Arri and asked if he would join me in this challenge. NHH had been through some chaotic leadership, and my challenge was to repair and bridge two very separate but interdependent areas of the school; the academics and those dealing with the administration. We spent almost two years together on a project called “Towards Connected Leadership”. Despite considerable scepticism among professors at the outset, and not everybody attending at first, the result was a full turnaround and a great teambuilding project.

Over the years, through Arri’s work I have experienced the beauty of working in a truly professional management team. It is great to experience how healthy friction can bring out the best of everyone. I have experienced many times the beauty of how a robust and open discussion can move a team forward and lead to creativity. Personally, I have learned a lot from Arri and feel that I have grown as a leader. As well as being a mentor, he was always there for me, guiding me when sound advice was called for. I definitely look forward to collaborating on a future leadership project, and recommend everyone who reads this to do so.

Sven Arend, CEO International Company, The Netherlands

I have known Arri for some years now and value him highly as a coach and sparring partner, both personally and for organisational transition. Throughout my career I have accompanied and led organisations in transitions of high growth, mergers, restructurings, and turnarounds. The urge is always to get on board and implement as quickly as possible, hoping for the organisation to follow, convinced that it must be obvious that “what I do is right!”. However, in order to be successful and swift we all need an engaged and motivated organisation. For this we need purpose and trust. As trivial as that may sound, those two aspects are often not developed and nurtured – leading to confrontation, frustration and failure.

It all begins with trust. Trust begins with the courage to give honest and true feedback in a constructive way, and to open yourself to receive this from others. This ability it seems is often lost in today’s world. People talk behind each other’s’ backs but often shy away from addressing the person concerned out of politeness. Developing trust is vital if a team is to function. We often underestimate how closely behaviour is monitored by others and judged. A leadership team without trust will not have the engagement of the organisation, and people will start playing with the divides in the team. Next, taking the time to jointly develop a vision and goal for the company, and breaking that down into individual targets, is one of the cornerstones of success. As Arri rightly describes, developing means listening to and involving and engaging, not just convincing the organisation of an opinion.

Arri worked with our organisation for around 6 months, beginning with my goal for the organisation followed by interviews to gather insights into the culture. He ran workshops in groups of around 10 participants to teach about human behaviour, creating the ability for people to open up and engage in healthy friction, leading to the creation of a joint vision and framework on how to implement this vision with clear roles and responsibilities. In addition, we arranged team sessions and individual coaching for specific issues. With his help we have created an engaged team that is driving towards our common goals in an energised and open way. And we still have the need to reflect constantly and adjust when we fall back into human but disruptive behaviour.

Joost Otterloo – Partner at SpencerStuart, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

I met Arri just after I joined Unilever in early 1997 when he led a performance management and personal development project. Almost 25 years later Arri is still a great coach for me, and a dear friend. Throughout the years Arri and I continued to work together, he was instrumental in my personal development and coached me through some of the most important business decisions of my life.

‘Freedom in a framework’ is a simple statement with a big philosophy behind it. When implemented with respect and trust it drives change, performance and job satisfaction. I have experienced it being successful time after time in multiple companies, countries and cultures. I encourage everybody to take inspiration from this book, to continue to develop their leadership style, and moreover also their followership, as everybody operates within a framework and everybody needs a degree of freedom.

Elly Pauw, HR Manager, Technical University Delft, Delft, The Netherlands

“Do you know Arri Pauw, is he related to you?” No, Arri is not family, but on the advice of a senior professor at our Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, I contacted him about 10 years ago. Since then we have worked together regularly on exciting leadership development issues in TU Delft.

Over that period, Arri provided coaching and training courses for professors and academic staff. Many of them participated in a week-long program where they intensively engaged in exploring the match between who they are as a person and their role in the organisation. Not only by talking, but also by practising activities way out of the comfort zone of the average professor: martial arts, improvised dancing, and improvised singing. The program made participants aware of their bodies beyond their brains. These TU Delft scientists, like so many highly educated people, generally try to solve issues with thoughts and rationale; but through these courses they became much more aware of the power and impact of their intuition and EQ. I’ve seen people really change their attitude after such a week and becoming much more impactful. Also Arri’s individual coaching programs often had noticeable and lasting positive impact on the staff members he worked with, irrespective of their subject discipline being in mathematics, mechanical

engineering, physics or architecture.

For me, the theme of leadership in academia has been one of the most fascinating topics in my 30 year long career as HR manager in TU Delft. Personal drive and ambition, the fear of confrontation, tension between controlling and letting go, striving for recognition and independence, organisational culture, career stress... all are elements that fit the theme of this book: 'Freedom in a Framework'. How to understand and align the individual goals of highly (IQ) intelligent professional people with the needs of emotionally intelligent (EQ) cooperation in service of the overall goals of the organisation.

In this book, Arri analyses and describes these forces and processes in clear and understandable ways. It gives a beautiful overview of his thoughts, insights and experiences. I am convinced it will also inspire readers who have not yet had the pleasure of working with Arri themselves.

Hans Leliveld, CEO, Microgen Engine Corporation Holding B.V., Wehl, The Netherlands

For many years I always refused to read any management books. Most of these are so called "7-steps books". Books which sort of guarantee that if you follow the steps, you will be successful. The reality is often different and more complex. Especially when a lot is at stake, either negatively or positively.

Arri and I met by coincidence, in 2007. A friend of mine, with experience from Shell and Booz Allen recommended Arri's leadership program. In his words it was the best he had ever done. I was equally as sceptical about management courses as about management books, so I initially resisted. But somehow my friend convinced me to get in contact with Arri. And I went.

Until this day, I have been grateful my friend persisted. Finally, there was someone (Arri) who not only understood the complexity and sensitivity of human beings in their interactions, relations and interests, but was also able to frame them in a logical way. Most importantly he did not 'tell' me about it; it was not about teaching or instructing – he got me to experience it myself.

This not only helped me to become a better leader in my business and with my people, it also gave me personally a much more solid grounding. Today, with my staff, rather than being stuck in conflict, we now often laugh about the reality of our Healthy Friction (a core concept you will read about in this book).

A couple of years later, his first book *The Road Within* was published. You

will understand – I started to read this one – but honestly, I haven't finished it. The practicality of the leadership program itself, the one-on-one coaching sessions with Arri I had had in the meantime, gave me the insights that brought it all home.

Can you imagine the challenge for me when he asked me to read his new book and if possible, to write an introductory note? I didn't want to refuse. Knowing Arri, he certainly would have come to a next level of understanding without getting lost in detail. And yes, this is the case... I truly read the full book and can honestly say that the material has further ripened, has deeper layers and has very vivid case studies. Therefore, as far as I am concerned, this book and Arri's name should have a place with the big names of leadership literature, like Peter Drucker, Manfred Kets de Vries, Arie de Geus and Geert Hofstede, names that even I still remember.

Marta Jakowluk, Chief People Officer, UPC Poland, Warsaw, Poland

I have known Arri since he worked with Unilever's CEE leadership Team back in 2012. At that time, the company was facing big issues which required an overall turnaround, and transformation of the leadership team into a high performing team.

Following Arri's contribution to the turnaround of the senior leadership, we wanted to extend his approach to the whole organisation. We implemented an extensive program around the notion of 'Healthy Friction' which seriously grew the quality of team cooperation across the organisation. Key words soon entered our daily business language and guided our behaviours. They even became a kind of mantra for our CEO in communicating with the employees.

In 2016 I moved to the telecom sector as Chief People Officer of UPC Poland. At a certain moment it became clear that the growth of this company needed boosting, success being closely related to the quality of the Senior Leadership Team. I remembered the 'Healthy Friction' approach and thought this to be perfect medicine for growing our team at UPC as well.

What I always appreciate in Arri's work is that before he starts any program, he wants to listen to every perspective, to be able to build a truly tailor-made program that really meets our needs. He quickly recognised the pitfalls in the team, he did not shy away from naming them, and put them on the table before the team. In doing so, I absolutely admire Arri's constructive and very transparent style. Our collaboration at UPC has reached it's third

year and is progressing well. He has been able to support us in building a strong team, coming out even stronger from the very difficult three COVID months in quarter 2 of this year. There is continued value in having Arri with us. He ensures consistency, can see the progress we make, and highlights and works with us on setbacks.

The principles of leadership and teamwork that Arri brings are logical, systematic and directly correlated with the business and results. His coaching is on both team and individual levels. Over the years, I have become very enthusiastic about the 'Freedom in a Framework' approach. I do believe and experience that if we as leaders put it into practice, we see tangible results.

The content of this book covers many rich questions and doubts on how to lead and work with a team in the current turbulent reality. Leaders applying these principles are able to extensively use the team's potential, ignite more motivation across team members and support each person in growing as authentic, strong leaders.

We all strive to support our people in motivating themselves and we look for the ways to do it. In the end, the key factors are universal. Simply because, in the business world all comes back to human nature and human interaction. In this book, Arri knows and shows it very well.