

WITH SEBASTIAN FLECK, 05 MAY 2025

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*INTERVIEWER:**Many organizations today talk about transformation. What are you observing – and what really matters?*

## SEBASTIAN:

Transformation has become a buzzword. Many organizations are engaged in structural, process, or cultural change – often with great effort but little impact. What I find missing in many cases is the willingness to seriously question existing patterns of thinking and attitudes and above all to focus on the relationship level. For me, this is the foundation for true and sustainable change.

In my view, transformation is a conscious process that moves people and organizations to the next level through coherent movement - with clarity, responsibility and healthy relationships. Everything else is cosmetic tweaking or pro forma work.

*INTERVIEWER:**What distinguishes mere change from real development?*

## SEBASTIAN:

Change can happen quickly: you change the organizational chart, introduce new tools, or simply rename less successful projects. What is often missing, however, is the relationship with people and therefore the impact. Development goes deeper. It happens when people are motivated to participate not because they have to, but because they understand what is really at stake.

Change can be imposed. Development happens when you create space for responsibility, friction, and relationships. Or to put it another way: "You have to walk the talk". Development does not start with processes. It begins with attitude. If you ignore that, you get action. But no substance.

*INTERVIEWER:**In this context, what does "Inspiring Quality" mean to you?*

## SEBASTIAN:

"Inspiring Quality" is not a slogan – it is my benchmark. Early on, I received feedback that my leadership style inspired people through my clarity, authenticity, and high standards for shared success. This has shaped my attitude: Quality starts with me. Always. Everywhere. It is effective when it inspires rather than controls.

I don't just want to change things, I want to enable development. When people feel taken seriously, when leadership creates clarity, and when systems support rather than hinder, excellence becomes possible - without pressure.

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*INTERVIEWER:**How did your work begin, and what was your focus at the time?*

## SEBASTIAN:

Having started my career in the pharmaceutical industry, it was only natural that I wanted to continue working and developing in this field. This is how I started my entrepreneurial career as a project manager for health authority inspections, particularly in the context of US-FDA inspections.

These projects were intense: short timeframes, high pressure, complex requirements. I learned how to create structure, clarify communication, and align teams toward a common goal, especially when the clock is ticking. Even then, it wasn't just about working through checklists. It was about attitude, responsibility and leadership in uncertain situations. That was my starting point and the initial impetus for everything that came later.

*INTERVIEWER:**How has your role and approach changed over the years?*

## SEBASTIAN:

As I continued to succeed, so did the responsibilities I began to take on. Inspection preparations became continuous improvement projects. Improvement projects became transformations with both operational and strategic goals.

During this time, my intuitive approach evolved into a clear system. I came to understand that technical solutions are only sustainable if they are also effective on a cultural and relational level. Selective project work became strategic groundwork to enable sustainable development.

Today, my work is more systematic, more deliberate, and much deeper. My role has changed from project manager to leader. I don't just organize, I lead on a structural, human and strategic level. I don't just agree, I challenge. I don't change for change's sake, I enable development.

*INTERVIEWER:**Were there any key moments that particularly influenced your attitude or way of working?*

## SEBASTIAN:

Yes, there were several. One particularly memorable experience was an intensive working session with a site manager during a site restructuring project at a leading global generics manufacturer. His credo was **"It's all about people"**. We integrated it into our project work almost like a mantra. Because without people, even the best processes and machines are useless. Ergo: Give people the space to develop and take responsibility, even when it gets uncomfortable. For me, that is the basis for sustainable success.

There have been other key moments in projects that were started with the best of intentions, but whose impact quickly fizzled out. Not because of a lack of expertise, but

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because there was no real relationship, no shared responsibility, and no clarity. When highly competent teams fail to make an impact because they are trapped in structures that dilute responsibility or create fear, expertise alone is not enough.

**INTERVIEWER:**

*What have you learned from working in high-pressure situations on complex transformation projects?*

**SEBASTIAN:**

High-pressure situations reveal how resilient a system really is. When time is short, demands are high, and the pressure is palpable, it's easy to see what works and what doesn't. In moments like these, you don't need perfect plans. What's needed is clarity, trust, decisiveness, and the cooperation of everyone involved.

I've learned that leadership in times like these is all about attitude. It's not about knowing every detail, but about taking responsibility for decisions and their consequences. It's not about knee-jerk reactions, it's about providing guidance. And it's about involving the right people at the right time and treating them as equals.

These experiences have taught me that structure and methodology are important, but what really matters is the ability to maintain relationships under pressure. If you can do that, you can still act. That's what makes the difference in successful transformations.

**INTERVIEWER:**

*How did the nessio® method come about – and what does it stand for?*

**SEBASTIAN:**

nessio® was born out of practical experience – not behind a desk, but in real projects, with real people, in real situations. Over the years, I have learned that change only works in the long run if you take relationships seriously. Structures alone are not enough. You need the right attitude.

I wasn't convinced by the approaches available on the market. And that's exactly what motivated me to create a viable method that really works. I wanted to create an approach that didn't divide things into "hard" and "soft", but instead integrated the main areas of tension: structure and relationships, leadership and culture, analysis and development. nessio® is therefore a relationship-oriented development approach that creates clarity, strengthens responsibility and enables impact at the individual, team and organizational levels. For me, nessio® was not a choice, but a necessity. It was an answer to what was missing in practice. And I am sure that I am not alone.

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*INTERVIEWER:**What makes this approach so effective, especially in an organizational context?*

SEBASTIAN:

nessio® works because it takes the reality of organizations seriously. It does not ignore structure and relationships. It brings both together in a common development process. This is exactly what is missing in many common models: they look at leadership, culture or change in isolation and are surprised when the desired effect does not materialize.

With nessio® it becomes clear where responsibility is taken and where not. Where development is possible and where it is blocked. The method creates clarity without overwhelming people, provides orientation without dogma, and enables development without dependence on consultants.

This is both a blessing and a curse: not all decision-makers can or want to face reality. Many tend to filter it, like a social media image, to suggest something that does not exist in the form communicated. Tragically, this attitude is rarely challenged, but often reinforced by passivity.

Those who want to face reality and enable real development will find a powerful answer in nessio®. The approach works just as well on the executive level as it does on the shop floor, because it focuses on relationships, not staging. And because it turns attitude into action.

*INTERVIEWER:**How do you combine structure, attitude, and relationships in your work?*

SEBASTIAN:

By consciously bringing them together. Because only when they interact do they unfold their full effect. Structure provides orientation. Attitude gives depth. Relationships enable trust. These three levels interlock in my work. For me, clarity is not an instrument of control, but an offer to take responsibility. Attitude is not revealed in words, but in actions. And this is especially evident when things get challenging.

"As a leader, you have to walk the talk". People are guided by what leaders model, not what they claim. Relationships are not a nice add-on, but the unifying force that makes development possible. Those who integrate structure, attitude, and relationships create more than efficiency. They create real effectiveness.

*INTERVIEWER:**What do organizations need now more than ever - and what can they let go of?*

SEBASTIAN:

Organizations today need clarity and direction. In times of highly dynamic geopolitical developments, uncertainties arise that create stress. Under stress, people fall back on familiar patterns. This is exactly what slows down ongoing transformation processes or causes them to revert to old ways of doing things.

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What is needed now is direction rather than control. Leadership instead of actionism. And above all, spaces where people can take responsibility instead of waiting for approval.

What can organizations let go of? The illusion that uncertainty can be controlled by ever more control. Or the idea that transformation can be outsourced to tools, campaigns, or external labels. Development cannot be delegated. It begins where people take responsibility – for themselves, for their impact, and for the common good. Those who face this honestly, especially in times of great uncertainty, gain the power to act, trust, and a quality that inspires.

*INTERVIEWER:*

*If you had to be summed up in one thought, what would it be?*

SEBASTIAN:

“No insight without experience. No experience with insight”. – Change begins with insight gained from experience and relationships. About the task at hand. In relation to the system. And about yourself.

*INTERVIEWER:*

*Thanks for the interview!*

SEBASTIAN:

You're welcome. It was great fun.