

J O C H E N Z E I T Z
A N S E L M G R Ü N

THE
MANAGER
a n d
THE MONK

A Discourse on
Prayer, Profit, and Principles



THE
MANAGER
and
THE MONK

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THE MANAGER and THE MONK

A Discourse on
Prayer, Profit, and Principles

JOCHEN ZEITZ
ANSELM GRÜN

WILEY

Cover design by Adrian Morgan
Cover image: Copyright © Thinkstock
Originally published in 2010 in German as *Gott, Geld und Gewissen*

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English translation by Susan Thorne
Published by Jossey-Bass
A Wiley Imprint

One Montgomery Street, Suite 1200, San Francisco, CA 94104-4594—www.josseybass.com

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data has been applied for and is on file with the Library of Congress.

ISBN 9781118479414 (cloth); ISBN 9781118554913 (ebk);
ISBN 9781118555002 (ebk); ISBN 9781118555866 (ebk)

Printed in the United States of America

FIRST EDITION

HB Printing

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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*For Dr. Bernd Deininger with grateful
acknowledgment and thanks for his assistance
in the development of this book*

PREFACE

In choosing to read *The Manager and the Monk*, you have chosen to accompany us on a journey to exchange ideas, challenge long-held belief systems, and discover new possibilities in us all. In fact, you have now become an integral part of this journey of discovery, and as we continue our dialogue, you will foster, deepen, and expand on your own inner dialogue as well.

Our conversation first began in 2008 at an onstage discussion in front of an audience in Nuremberg. As “The Monk” and “The Manager,” we faced one another from opposite ends of the spectrum. On one end, Anselm Grün represented a life lived in spiritual practice, and on the other, Jochen Zeitz embodied a life synonymous with business and financial success. On that fateful day we confronted such challenging questions as: Do core values stand a chance in the world of business? To what extent does a monk think like a manager? How much consideration and empathy can a manager afford to show? What do money and success mean to us?

Although we did not have time that day to explore those questions in detail, something intangible but necessary seized us. We were able to gain a basic impression of the other’s ideas and

instinctively knew that we had happened upon pieces of a puzzle we had both been trying to solve but couldn't finish individually, based just on our own focused and concentrated life experiences. We knew this would be the beginning of another level of enlightenment and knowledge in our lives if we continued our conversation. Since then, we have repeatedly met in person and exchanged e-mails and phone calls. Over time, we developed a unique relationship, one always based on respect and a desire for mutual understanding.

Before our first meeting, we knew a little about each other, thanks to the media:

Anselm Grün was "The Monk," a Benedictine monk from Münsterschwarzach Abbey near Würzburg. He was a renowned author of numerous books on spirituality and counseling and a prominent clergyman. As Cellarer of the abbey, he was responsible for the financial and business management of a community of three hundred monks and staff, overseeing approximately twenty workshops and several hectares of farmland, meadows, and wooded areas.

"The Manager" was Jochen Zeitz, a "citizen of the world" who had, at that time, been chairman and CEO of PUMA, the publicly listed sporting goods and lifestyle company, for eighteen years, since the young age of thirty. The company is headquartered in Herzogenaurach, Franconia, near Nuremberg, and is just 70 kilometers from Münsterschwarzach Abbey. PUMA is a globally recognized brand directly employing over nine thousand employees and providing work for over fifteen thousand people through factories that produce PUMA products. The group has annual sales of over €3 billion.

We were aware that the missions and goals of our organizations and our lifestyles were worlds apart; this is exactly what drew us together. As people—and as authors—we were initially surprised and intrigued to find that there is more that unites us than divides

us. We both wish to protect the environment, improve society, and employ sustainable methods, both within our “companies” and beyond. As managers, we must learn to conduct business without harming people or the environment. As spiritual human beings, we look for ways to find ourselves and create more unity without losing sight of the need for efficient management.

During this journey, we did not simply exchange opinions: we also exchanged roles to experience each other’s world. The Manager spent some time in the monastery, where he was able to find peace and see his world from a different point of view—and where many things fell into perspective. In return, The Monk expanded his knowledge of “virtual” companies such as PUMA and the fast-paced, electronically networked world of targets and numbers by visiting the group headquarters and attending conferences.

To this day, we continue our exchanges because our main objective is to improve ourselves and our environment, every day and in every way we can. We hope that in reading our book, you too will feel encouraged and inspired to seek the same goal and open your world and mind, continuing our conversation within yourself.

Anselm Grün and Jochen Zeitz

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CHAPTER 1

SUCCESS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
JOCHEN ZEITZ

When I was asked to take over the helm of PUMA at twenty-nine, I inherited a company nearing bankruptcy. Three CEOs had failed in the previous three years and the company had lost money for eight consecutive years. In my first two years at PUMA, the company had nothing to show in terms of success. During this time I felt tremendous happiness when at least our athletes won. Following drastic cost-cutting measures, the only three well-known athletes whom I had been able to keep under sponsoring contracts all won gold medals in the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. Years later I had the same feeling of deep satisfaction when Serena Williams, one of our PUMA athletes, rose up in the tennis world and became the first African-American to lead the world rankings. I was glad four years ago when Italy—sponsored by PUMA—unexpectedly won the world championship after a sensational scandal in the Italian soccer league.

I was just as pleased about Usain Bolt, whom we had put under contract as a seventeen-year-old. Winning the Olympic gold medals for the 100-meter and 200-meter sprints in *both* Beijing in 2008 and London in 2012, Bolt has often been dubbed “the fastest man

ever.” Running against other mortals Bolt does give the impression of moving so fast that he could reach liftoff and fly. And he has become all but a superhero to his fellow Jamaicans—he won half of their Olympic gold medals in both 2008 and 2012. Bolt, whom I have been privileged to know since he became affiliated with PUMA, had been written off by many track experts when he was injured, and when he seemed not serious about training early on in his career. Others sometimes encouraged me to drop him as one of our PUMA athlete representatives. And yet I stood behind him as he set world records again and again. Bolt has always rebounded from setbacks to become even faster. This triumph over the odds raises the bar for what is possible in the realms of national and personal athletic success.

Whenever PUMA has been associated with an outstanding athletic moment through the victories of excellent athletes, my team and I were successful. We felt pride, joy, and happiness—all at once.

THE SUCCESS PYRAMID

It is usually triumphs like these, whether our own or those of people with whom we are associated, that stamp our concept and understanding of success. There is a Success Pyramid corresponding to the American psychologist Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid. Maslow explained the goals of human action in 1943 by means of the model of steps: different important human needs make up the steps of a pyramid that the individual climbs. First, he strives to satisfy his physical needs: food, warmth, clothing, reproduction. Once he succeeds in this, he searches for safety, then later on for social belonging, personal recognition, and finally self-actualization.

The level of each person’s success also depends on his or her personal values and standards for success. Those for whom

competitions, personal-best accomplishments, and unmatched excellence play a great role will perhaps regard a gold medal at the Olympic Games as the highest measure of success. Others place value on cooperation, sympathy, and creative solutions.

In today's consumer society, those people who have more euros, dollars, or yuan at their disposal are considered more successful. Mantras such as "more is better," "size matters," and "quantity, not quality" drown out the call for more profound definitions of success.

I don't want to give the impression that I consider material success unimportant. I personally appreciate prosperity because along with it come greater freedom, independence, and choices. Specifically, I have a growing number of opportunities to devote myself to tasks outside my profession, to experiment, and to realize my dreams in these areas. Thus, I would certainly not say that money is the root of all evil, but I will say that when someone primarily wants to make gold and accumulate it at any price, it is unlikely that he will behave correctly, responsibly, or unselfishly. For me, this is all a matter of balance and harmony, but this does not mean refusing material things in favor of spiritual ones, or the reverse. It is valid instead to appreciate both, recognizing that they complement each other. Victories and gestures of humanity do not exclude each other. Sometimes the first of these just makes the second one possible!

Maslow's pyramid begins at the bottom with the fundamental, bodily, existential needs. Materialism plays the decisive role here. Millions of people chalk it up as a success when they just survive one more day or one more year. Food, clothing, and other material goods are much more important for those who never have the luxury of taking them for granted. But is this minimum or maximum success? It doesn't appear to be an earth-shattering triumph when one has to be content just to survive or merely to exist. For an existentialist, however, being happy and pleased to exist is a success.

As a manager at PUMA, I have definitely reached the highest rung of success; in Maslow's model, I have been striving for self-actualization for a long time. Yet needs arise even at this level, and the way you define your success changes. In the beginning, I felt that I was successful when I managed to renew the company in a tricky situation, step by step. I was enormously satisfied that I could help more and more people get jobs and positions and offer customers better performance. But over time, I raised the measuring yardstick higher and higher. Record wins were supposed to be achieved in unbroken succession, for as many years as possible.

Then I strove for creative success, and we triumphed when we became the first sports lifestyle brand. We sounded a paradigm shift in our sector by combining sport, an attitude to life, and fashion. Every innovation that our company designed seemed to me to be a higher form of success, a higher prize to tick off. It became important to be ahead in our sector and to keep redefining our brand. To me, our recognition as an innovative, rule-changing company felt like a new form of success.

Our idea of success changes with age, experience, and awareness. Today I strive for success in going beyond conventional company management. One success along the way was PUMAVision, which we developed. Another is my private foundation, which is intended to make a contribution to nature conservation.

HAVING OR BEING

The psychologist Erich Fromm didn't ask, "To be or not to be?" but rather "To have or to be?" In his book by the same name, Fromm puts forward the thesis that there are two types of existence quarreling over the soul of man. On one side, the power called "having" pulls us toward accumulation of power and possessions—the trappings of traditional success—and ultimately in

the direction of the aggression necessary to attain them. This dark power is embodied in global violence, avarice, and envy. On the other side, the force of “being” pulls us toward love and the joy of sharing and creating. This “being” leads to productive activity and to creative relationships supporting the best in a society.

In a similar fashion, Martin Buber differentiated between “being” and “appearing.” A large part of our human struggle for survival, Buber says, has to do with the striving for a particular appearance. We want to impress, so instead of being ourselves, we wear masks to give us a certain appearance while we actually lead a hidden life. These are not masks in the form of makeup, clothing, or rituals behind which we hide our bodies, as for Carnival or Halloween; but rather the pretenses, justifications, and even lies with which we hope to conceal our authentic selves. “Appearing” keeps us from reaching the goal of “authenticity,” as Buber calls it—but all too often the rules of traditional success value appearances over authenticity.

Can a person truly be successful when he no longer is present enough to smell the fragrance of roses, taste the flavor of coffee, or feel every drop of water in a shower? Psychologists maintain that we miss two-thirds of our lives because we spend one third of every moment in the imaginary future and another third in the past. We ask ourselves what our neighbor meant with his comment yesterday, and torment ourselves about whether the person of our desires will call—and in the process, we miss the sunset taking place directly before our eyes, and forget to live. Presumably true presence in every single moment, or more precisely just “being,” is at the very top of the Success Pyramid.

Many managers suffer from a syndrome that could be called “push-aholism”—that is, the constant pressure to look ahead and get ahead. “Push-aholism” can eventually lead to burnout. Often I catch myself racing around in overdrive, forgetting to observe life’s rhythms, to have regular moments of relaxation, or to set work