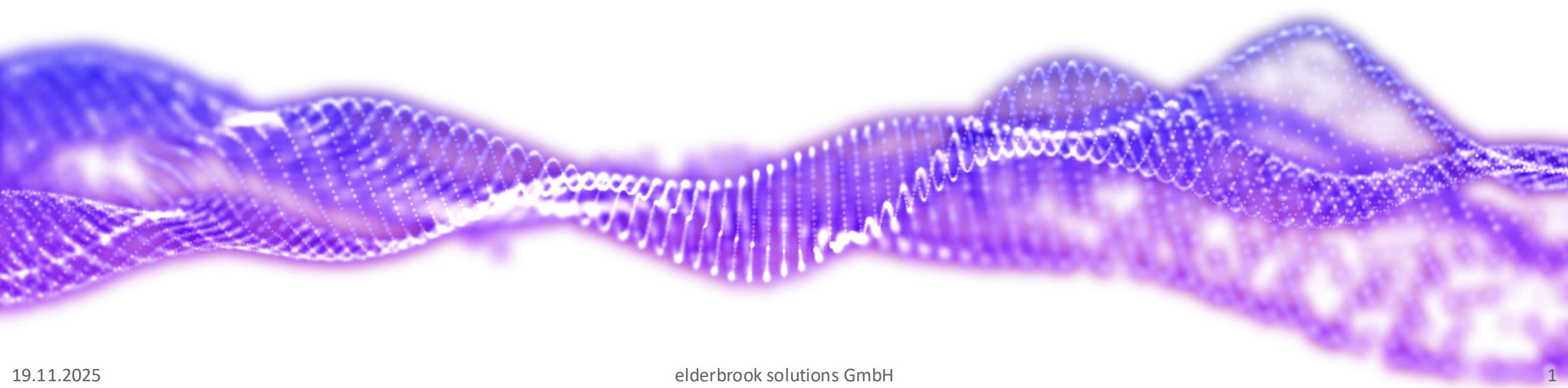


PM08

Managing through talent

Karolina Filar



Why

- my story
- goals

How

- resistance and risk
- example contracts

Closing remarks



My story - beginning

I became a project lead when someone quit.

I continued doing the same work.

My project was growing.

- Staff turnover

- Too many emails and meetings

I tried delegating.

- People did things differently than I would.

- Instructions were not followed.

My story - processing

I realised few things:

- I had no time to use my technical expertise.
- What matters is what my team is capable of doing.
- I had my own learning curve to take care for:
 - new functions to interact with
 - budgets and KPI tracking
- I needed to train the team to be able to work without my constant supervision.

My story - analysis

The team had strengths:

- insightful questions
- great documentation and working instructions
- good email drafts
- very quick programming

Not all tasks required my level of knowledge.

My story - idea

I decided to use full potential of the team.

- more ambitious tasks

- leaders – region-wise or topic-wise

I wanted them to own topics

- They handle emails and meetings.

- Questions go to them.

- It is their responsibility to ask for help if needed.

Goals

What I hoped to achieve:

Delegation of easy and repetitive tasks

My focus to go to my tasks – for the team's benefit

Safe space for the team to learn and experiment

...and for me to challenge them...

Culture of learning and discussing mistakes

Team's feeling of excitement about the job

Increased engagement, team spirit

Sick/ annual leave back up

What could go wrong

People had concerns:

- Juniors - scared to interact with client or senior colleagues
- Seniors - quality will be impacted
- Management - promotion/ salary expectation increase
- Myself
 - People will burn out because of stress.
 - Am I a good leader if I just „let people do all the work“?

How to mitigate risk

Action plan:

- Invest in team members' self-awareness and confidence.
- Communicate expectations clearly.
- Give plenty of support.
- Small steps.
- I need to explain what I can and cannot promise.

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.”

John Quincy Adams

Solutions

I offered all of the below:

- Detailed individual contract
 - Time-bound
 - Clear expectations, task level
- Strong support
 - Individual mentoring
 - On-the-job shadowing
 - Weekly meetings

Example contract - Robin

Example Contract - Robin

Talents and successes of Robin

- interest to research e.g. check in data if subjects have the diagnosis expected by the protocol
- identified a mistake in SDTM mapping

Areas to work on

- gets lost in the CRF and SDTMs due to lack of experience
- Does not know where to look up for documentation.
- Does not know who can help with questions.

Example Contract – Robin Month 1

I organized open training where I explained:

- aCRF creation
- raw data process
- standard mappings
- what external data is

New Robin's tasks:

- Reviewing the SDTM issues tracker before the weekly meetings
- Adding new data issues into the tracker

Example Contract – Robin Month 2

In the second month:

- Robin attended SDTM-related calls.
- They were introduced to the SDTM team.
- Reviewed SDTM P21e findings.
- Attended CQM as a silent listener.
- Attended interim analysis review meeting as a silent listener.

Example Contract – Robin Month 3

Options:

- Lead SDTM-related topics.
- Coding some data checks
- Setting up patient dossiers

We have decided that Robin will take responsibility for topics related to SDTMs. They felt confident in it, it also involved research that they enjoyed.

Example contract - Ash

Case study – Ash

Talents and successes of Ash:

- Organised
 - Maintained a list of their questions
 - Had a habit of writing meeting minutes
- Caring about the communication
 - Engaged in clearing misunderstanding in the calls
 - Encouraged everyone to share their view

Areas to work on:

- Getting very upset when witnessing a conflict
- Scared after one unsuccessful client call

Example contract – Ash Month 1

We started slow:

- Preparing agenda and minutes for weekly status calls
- Discussing what they witnessed there

How I handled questions that I did not know how to answer

- Rephrasing to confirm understanding
- Scheduling a separate call
- Asking for sending it by email

If someone was upset – was it better that they spoke up or not?

Example contract – Ash Month 2

We increased exposure

- Ash led the weekly status calls
 - Opening and closing topics, summarizing action items
 - Controlling time
 - Not pleasant to interrupt
 - Is it beneficial for the team to control time in the calls or not?

Ash attended some ad-hoc calls as a silent listener.

We discussed anything that they would not know how to handle.

Example contract – Ash Month 3

Options

- Ash attends calls where negotiation or conflict is expected.
 - vocabulary, managing stress
- More administrative
 - handling some regular, calm call
- More social direction
 - preparing soft skills trainings
 - organizing social outings

Ash decided to get trained in handling difficult Client.

They then trained other colleagues.

They run a blog in internal company social media to encourage exchange.

Example contract - Arya



Case study – Arya

Talents and successes of Arya:

- technical background
 - asks questions about the systems that I do not know the answer to
- writes macros to automate processes
- shares knowledge and tools

Areas to work on:

- finding someone who can answer Arya's questions
- checking if their skills can be used in the company

Case study – Arya

Initially a contract was not planned

We spoke to my manager to help Arya network.

We found internal project led by the management.

Agreed 10-20% of Arya's time, mornings.

After a month Arya

enjoyed the technical aspects of this project

felt very stressed by working in two places

Example contract – Arya Month 1

Contract to improve communication

Arya CCed me in the emails, added me to calls.

I saw the pressure:

- last-minute ad-hoc requests
- tasks shared without assignment

Tasks for Arya

- Email both teams to explain the availability.
- Repeat the message in the team meetings.
- Start sending a confirmation when accepting a task.

Example contract – Arya Month 2

Arya was still stressed, daily

switching the project was time- and energy-consuming
needed to keep drawing a boundary

What we realized

Arya hoped that the team will remember their schedule and adjust

Arya was shy to say no

Afraid to be perceived as not engaged

Clinical team has no information about the schedule

We practiced communication – I rephrased what Arya said until the message was clear.

We decided to try switching non-clinical work to 8 hours on Friday only.

Example contract – Arya Month 2

Arya wrote the needed emails again and followed up by a call.

Outcome:

- the internal project team was not aware of Arya's stress levels
- they agreed to limit the requests to Fridays only
- the clinical team flagged a concern about delivery weeks
 - flexibility to reschedule internal project work
 - Arya presented what they worked on

Arya added the working schedule into their email footnote.

Example contract – Arya Month 3 and later

Arya handled communication about their availability around:

- delivery in the clinical project

- leave plans

- friendly reminders

This month I was still in CC of the emails.

Arya did not give up and kept participating in the internal project.

Few months later the tool was presented to the whole company.

Closing remarks

Leading is different than doing work

Do not delay giving people exposure

Give them all kind of support and let them do it

Differences in the team are a chance – use talents

Mistakes are lessons

Be loud about what people achieve

Bring joy and excitement to work

Thank you for listening!

Questions?

Email: karolina.filar@ext.elderbrooksolutions.com

