

Neuropunk with Tinsel

„Brain Research“ or alternatively the prefix „neuro-“, is surely among the top buzzwords of today. The representatives of the discipline are superstars of science, and they are often invited to explain whatever to us – apparently there is an assumption that their competence will automatically diffuse into any other domain.

No wonder is there a tendency among providers of services to surf this wave. Practically every area is beset by such neuro-turbos, not least – especially annoying from my point of view, of course – management and consulting: neuro coaching, neuro leadership, the neurobiology of successful change processes, brain research for organisational consulting, brain research for leaders, neuro marketing.

Or, one of my favorites: „women as leaders – a Neurobiologist from the US explains why their brain performance is so in demand.“ At least, female leaders will be pleased to hear that men care for their brains, for once...

The wordings are alike: „Our brain controls our emotions“, „our brain does this and that“: Me and my brain. Sometimes I wonder how many others might live inside me – everybody home?...

Honestly: have you ever encountered a finding from brain research that really surprised you? I once heard a neuroscientist say: „To the present day, brain research has found NOTHING that philosophy and psychology didn't already know for years.“ Small breaks increase productivity; we are able to learn up to high age; empathy exists – wouldn't you know?

There is a brain area doing one thing, another brain area is responsible for another. To find this out, scientists for example put current into the brain of subjects by applying magnetic fields, right through their skull, and then look how it twinkles, thanks to the brain imaging techniques. All right, I am not an expert, but if you still ask me, this seems to me a method with the differentiation level of a cluster bomb. Heinz von Förster [commented](#) on approaches like this fifteen years ago – I doesn't seem to me that much has changed.

Should I use morse code with my clients rather than speak to them?

And yet it's not the scientists pushing the hype, at least only a few of them. In an [article](#) written by eleven leading neuroscientists I find the following passage: „But all progress will not end with a triumph of neuronal reductionism...brain research will clearly have to distinguish between what it can say and what is outside of it's responsibility – just as musicology does indeed have quite something to say about a fugue by Bach, but it has to remain silent about it's unique beauty.“

No, the reason for the hype around neuroscience, in my opinion, lies in the instance that we don't cease to hope that the world might be determined causally and that somebody be there to tell us how it all works.

But I do not believe that the development of brain science is located on a straight line the extrapolation of which will crash right into the Philosopher's Stone, but on an asymptote, approaching it's subject continuously without reaching it ever. Have you ever been neuronally touched? When it comes to learning something about ourselves or about our organisations, I find that the humanities are much more abundant. If you don't wait until brain science has confirmed all their wisdom, you save much time.